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THE

SUBSTANCE

OF

SOME LETTERS,

WRITTEN BY

AN ENGLISHMAN RESIDENT AT PARIS

DURING

THE LAST REIGN

OF THE

EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

WITH

An Appendix

OF

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS.

37598

"How nations sink, by darling schemes oppress
"When vengeance listens to the fool's request.

Vanity of Human Wis. s.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1816.

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PREFACE.

The following letters are composed from the same journal which furnished the writer with the materials of a very active and detailed correspondence with several of his intimate acquaintance, some of whom, being members of the legislature, were interested in receiving intelligence more correct than could be obtained through the usual channels, at a time when the total perversion of some facts, the partial selection of others, and the unfair construction put upon such as found their way to the public press, aided a delusion, to which, in a greater degree perhaps than to the exertions of ministerial influence, must be attributed the parliamentary majorities that enabled the government to undertake the late war with France.

The writer, during his residence at Paris in the months of April, May, June and July of the last year, was a spectator of those events and appearances in France, which the journals and orators of his own country pretended to pourtray, but which formed a complete contrast with every thing said or written by the agents or supporters of the Bourbon cause, both in England and on the continent. Feeling persuaded that from a minute description of that which was passing before his eyes, the conclusion to be drawn could not fail to be favourable to the principles which he had been taught to consider the only safe and honourable guides of an English politician; and being shocked at the misrepresentations upon which the policy of the British cabinet appeared to him to be entirely founded, he thought it his duty, as it must be that of every individual, however insignificant, to lose no opportunity of transmitting to his friends a detailed account of passing transactions, accompanied with comments, which he conceived must be allowed naturally to arise from an unprejudiced view

of those transactions, and which he therefore supposed he might take the liberty of intruding upon his correspondents.

In treating the subject of the foreign policy of the British government, the writer could not but frequently touch upon the public character and conduct of those of his fellow countrymen with whom that policy is immediately connected, and particularly of the minister on whom it may be supposed more especially to depend.

Having, in the course of several visits to the continent, been forced into the conviction that our relations with the European cabinets are carried on by such agents as must insure the commission of many errors, and that the real character of our principal representative during the late momentous events is very different from that which the pretensions of himself and his partisans, together with the fortuitous concurrence of some unforeseen successes, would induce us to believe, he has

judged it necessary not to confine himself to the vague censure of measures, without any notice of individual conduct or opinion, but has ventured to characterise certain men, in such terms as he thought suitable to their public career, and not exceeding the freedom with which in his country it has always been judged allowable to speak of dangerous or mistaken politicians.

It would have been easy for him to have erased from his publication the personal animadversions of his private correspondence; and by so doing, he would have exempted it from the obloquy and retaliation of a very powerful and prevalent portion of those who are the most likely to become his readers. He has no resentments to gratify, and not having to complain of ingratitude for services which he never performed, nor of the refusal of favours for which he never applied; he is actuated by none of the animosities arising from disappointment or neglect. He has been placed in none of the circumstances which in party writers not unfrequently

give rise to the malignity which Tacitus himself allows is the more pernicious, as it is sometimes mistaken for a bold impartiality and an honest liberty of speech. He has spoken of men in their public capacity, merely because he is persuaded that the line of policy which his government has thought fit to pursue has depended on the positions and propensities of two or three statesmen—nay, even of one preponderating politician, to a degree so unusual, that the adoption of the "*shadow fighting*," declared by a great moral poet to be no less inefficacious than safe, would have been a base compromise of the interests of the cause, to which all his endeavours, such as they are, are now devoted and will be for ever applied.

Could the writer of these letters suppose that they would receive any weight from the subscription of his name, he would not hesitate to designate his person as distinctly as his opinions; but not presuming to indulge any such persuasion, he trusts entirely to the truth of his statements for

that credibility which an author of more importance might obtain partly from his personal testimony.

He must also advertise the reader, that he has been exceedingly cautious in inserting the names of any of those individuals, who, when they condescended to communicate with him, had probably no wish nor expectation of appearing before the public in the character of his informants. He should think it too ill a compliment to them, if he did not owe it to himself, to say, that as he never admitted any of their anecdotes to a place in these letters without a conviction of their authenticity, either from the character of the narrator, or from circumstances corroborative of their probability, he is afraid of no investigation to which they may give rise.

Having premised thus much, the writer finds it necessary to subjoin, that his purpose in publishing these letters is similar to that which guided his pen in their original composition, and that if he succeeds

in winning over even one honourable man from the ranks of those who still approve, as they once supported the late war against national independence, he shall think himself amply repaid for any exposure of personal or literary reputation. Declarations of patriotism he leaves to those to whose professions their country may listen with delight, because much profit may be expected from their services; but he trusts his assertion will not, by those to whom he is known, be thought unbecoming or misplaced, if he ventures to say, that no motive less pure than an anxiety to stamp with its true character a system of aggression whose apparent success may serve for a precedent fatal to our own liberties has prompted him to undertake a task, which he laments that some other person more qualified than himself has not been enabled from similar opportunities to perform.

It is not impossible that the reader may be startled at the variableness, or, if the expression may be used, the shadow of changing, discoverable in the

conduct and characters here described, and, as it may seem to him, in the opinion of the writer; who, if the inconsistencies be in himself, and not in his subject —if his story has varied, except with varying facts, must submit, and is contented, to be condemned. He must, however, be judged by those whom local and cotemporary knowledge has enabled to decide upon his statements, and who shall be proved to have had immediate means of information equal, at the least, to his own. He asks no fairer trial—but he shall appeal from any critic not so qualified. He may easily be supposed to have thought sometimes better, sometimes worse of the personages before him, and by communicating his present impressions, he conceived, that so far from perplexing his correspondents, he enabled them to collect one important truth—the partial fluctuation of character and opinion in the Parisian world.

Before this preface is concluded, notice should be taken of a work, entitled, "A

Narrative of Events which have taken place in France, from the landing of Napoleon Bonaparte, on the 1st of March, 1815, till the restoration of Louis XVIII." —which work, though it made its appearance after this collection of letters had been prepared for the press, seemed to the writer to add to the urgency which he imagined to exist, for attempting to disabuse his fellow countrymen on the subject of the return and last reign of the Emperor Napoleon. Certainly the author of that work and the writer of these letters did not look at the same side of the shield, and it is possible that one city in the diversities of civil discord may, like Pope's single nymph, present many moral portraits.

"All how unlike each other, all how true."

But it must be permitted him to declare solemnly, that were it not notorious that the composer of the Narrative was a spectator of the events she describes, he would not hesitate to aver, that she had employed the optics of the editors of some minis-

terial journal, rather than those eyes which beamed with delight at the dawn of continental freedom, and communicated their animation to so many admirers of revolutionary France.

It may be necessary to add, that, although that narrative will appear to be directly contradicted by many positions contained in these letters, yet not a line of them was written in the contemplation of such a controversy, nor, except in one solitary instance, where the assumed fact was too important to be left uncontradicted, has been retouched in consequence of any statements advanced by the above author.

The writer concludes this preliminary notice by stating, that at the advice of his friends he has reprinted some public documents in the original French, and that he trusts the interest which they must

command, from being, in some measure, an official account of the last reign of the Emperor, and from having as yet been only very partially communicated to his fellow countrymen, will excuse the appendix which they compose at the end of these volumes.

SUBSTANCE

OF SOME

LETTERS

WRITTEN FROM PARIS DURING THE LAST REIGN

OF THE

EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

LETTER I.

Brussels, April 8, 1815.

MY DEAR ——

A son of an English archbishop once told me that during the siege of Gibraltar his father was dancing at the balls of Paris. Since the commencement of the revolution war the animosities of governments seem to have been communicated to whole nations, and, especially as far as concerns France and England, each individual has become a belligerent. The mutual civilities of their diplomatists at neutral courts have long been dropped, and, without any atten-

tion to the want of civilized intercourse or the decency of christian communion, the war has been carried on, to the scandal of the barbarous and Mahometan world, even by their residents at Pera and Tihiran. It may not be easy to say with whom this pitiful practice commenced, but personal experience has taught me that the worthy members of our missions have carried it into most full and painful effect; so much so, indeed, as to exclude from the benefit of their protection, and to refuse the light of their countenance to those found guilty of holding even parley with any Frenchman, whose attentions, like those of the devil, seem to convey a supposition of preaptitude for such evil communications; and to be judged therefore sufficient cause for excommunication from the society of all the good, the loyal, and the true. Certainly, however, neither the interests of humanity nor of policy have gained by this universal diffusion of antipathies: for although it might have served the turn of our statesmen in 1793 to represent every Frenchman a man-eater and an atheist, whose existence was incompatible with modern civilization; yet for us, who are not the cotemporaries of Legendre and Danton, to treat all our neighbours as if they were the accomplices of those miscreants, cannot be just nor profitable: it cannot be just, because the Frenchmen of the revolu-

tion are no longer to be found in France; it cannot be of service to our policy, for such a persuasion must originate from an entire ignorance of existing national character, the knowledge of which I presume to be the first and most indispensable quality in those concerned in the management of political intercourse. I will say nothing of the selfish and presumptuous feelings, the bad passions and prejudices which the encouragement of such a hatred tends naturally to produce and nourish in the mind of the whole nation. Fortunately the humanity of Englishmen has thwarted every effort to diffuse this savage principle, as far as relates to persons and circumstances which are not within the control of politicians either at home or abroad: their generous nature associates itself with none so easily as with their immediate neighbours; nor does war ever assume so civilized a form as in the contest with the armies of France: our soldier considers that he does not serve the cause of his country or his king by cherishing principles of animosity and revenge against the individuals of the opposing enemy; whom, in spite of the suggestions of the brave warriors of the two Houses and their applauding journalists, they look upon as men very much like themselves, engaged in a stated duty, with a certainty of subsistence, and a hope of advancement and reward. Those who have lived much

with our army know there is a liberality in the opinions of our military men relative to France which would scarcely be tolerated in some ministerial circles, or perhaps in the walls of parliament. This liberality at all times renders their victories more dear to us, because less dangerous. Were they liable to adopt all the prejudices of cold-blooded politicians, and, sinking the citizen in the soldier, to receive the maxims of a corrupt court as their only rule of civil conduct, then indeed might we tremble at their prowess. But, since the example of the army of James, we need not fear that British soldiers should ever be true to tyranny; nor, to serve their monarch, betray themselves. The horror which it has been the fashion either to feel or to affect at the name of a Frenchman, without being taken off the nation at large, has been latterly concentrated and accumulated upon the head of Napoleon; whom, after exhausting every opprobrious epithet before unapplied to any potentate, it was at last agreed to designate as the Enemy of the human race, a title belonging, *par excellence*, to the Evil One, and calculated to inspire a sort of blind terror and universal detestation of this Satanic personage. Posterity will hardly know how to reconcile the proverbial courage and sense of our countrymen with the expression of such fears as they will find in the predictions and revelations

of the preachers and politicians of the present age; who, by helping out the Apocalypse with an anagram, behold in this warrior sometimes the Horned Beast, at others Apollyon himself. They will smile at the complacency with which we contemplated the dethronement of the Abomination of Abominations as the accidental good which was to be blown to us by this ill wind, as well as at the facility with which, sacrificing our former interpretations to our present interests, our prophecy to our politics, forgetting our faith as our circumstances improved, we strained every nerve to prevent the accomplishment of our own prediction, and in the indiscriminate fury of our opposition to the devil, took up the cudgels for him with whom he had been, in every British heart, so long allied—the Pope. The children of the present generation have been taught to start at the name of Bonaparte as if he was in the bush; our colleges and academies have given prizes to those who should best pourtray his crimes. The painter has sketched a countenance to correspond with the fancied features of treason, murder, cruelty, and pride. Not the terrors of a degenerate Roman could have beheld the imp-begotten Attila under an aspect so hideous. The pious from their pulpit prayed for that resignation, patience, and humility under this scourge of God, which were recommended from

the benches of parliament as the true christian virtues necessary for those who were to be borne along without a murmur by the current of events, to bear all trial of taxation, and to be content with the mean instruments through whom (the help and cunning of man being altogether of no avail) they might, in the appointed time and hour, work out their salvation. Such was the general feeling; to be insensible to which was looked upon as the proof of a hardened mind, perverted by, or perhaps already associated with, wickedness. It is true, and more strange, that in order to complete the monster which the world never saw, there were many amongst us who arrayed him in all bad qualities, contradictory and inconsistent; interweaved with the giant vices all the baser imperfections of humanity, and, to justify their hatred and their fear, denounced him as a coward and a fool. These epithets were designed to take all pretext for admiration from those, who perversely gazed with feelings not unmixed upon the most extraordinary career ever recorded in the annals of ambition. They were employed to deepen the reprobation already attached to those who saw in Napoleon Bonaparte a fortunate soldier—of no less capacity than inclination for conquest and dominion—undaunted—persevering—unsatisfied—with most of the vices and virtues of conquerors—comparable to any of the

great names of history by his exploits, inferior to some of them by the failings which a cotemporary view enables us to see and prompts us to condemn, superior to most of them as being untarnished by those monstrous deeds which characterized the age or habits of other heroes.

It was in vain that the imputed poisonings, and assassination of single captives, became an idle tale, abandoned at last by those who gave to them their original credit. The Emperor of the French, King of Italy, Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, was still to be charged with withdrawing from his throne and his myriads in arms, to strangle an unarmed British sailor; and it was still to be accounted a want of patriotism for an Englishman to regard him in any other light than the murderer of his countryman. The fall of this Dagon by no means terminated the persecution of his name, nor of his imputed worshippers. It was discovered, that not France, not her capital itself, could show a single evidence that her usurper had ever contemplated to make her beautiful or great. The hatred and fear which his power might have inspired, and which might be supposed to drop with it, were transferred to the alleged friends of his system and principles; but the charges of cowardice and folly were renewed: he was a coxcomb, profligate,

empty and vain; a mortal of an ordinary mind and mould; daring and impetuous, nothing more—good-natured, it is true, and communicative, but quite on the usual level; a fit companion for the simple and younger classes of mankind;—a man about whom the world had been much mistaken; or, as a midshipman of the Undaunted said, in a letter to his friend, "all in the wrong." That he had found admirers was unaccountable. Those who knew him most, liked him least; a vulgar familiarity constituted all the charm of his converse, which, after all, could have no effect upon the open heart of plain honesty, averse to the blandishments of a knave. Not content to visit with indignation those who did not regard him as the weakest and the most dangerous being in existence, yet, without any power of attraction; as the most insignificant and the most to be dreaded of mortals, yet never to be listened to for a moment; it was found useful to assert, that the admiration of such a character which was to be so much deprecated, did not in fact exist. A scandalous story had been told of the inclinations manifested towards this worthless personage by the crew of the frigate which conveyed him to Elba. It was too true and undeniable, that the officers of that ship had listened to the voice of the tempter. For this

the commanding officer had received his reward. What was his reception at home in return for having bestowed upon an acknowledged Emperor the honours of sovereignty, and for not having employed those torments of insult by which the fallen monarch might feel his dignity to be dying, it would be little to the credit of our admiralty to record.

But this reception was not judged a sufficient punishment; the mistaken conduct of that *cajoled* though gallant officer was to be publicly arraigned, and a channel of accusation was found in the pages of a literary journal, devoted usually to better purposes. A half official memoir was ushered into the world, compiled I have good reason to believe partly from the papers of the military gentleman, who, from his residence at Elba, was a judge more competent, but I now think hardly so fair as the above-mentioned midshipman of the Undaunted, and who, unless his colouring was heightened by other hands, made it seems the discovery of that youth, that his charge was nothing above the usual run, a very commonplace-minded man, imprudent and unguarded to an excess, incapable of keeping a secret in love, or war, or politics; with a flux of talk both as to past, present, and to come, quite unbecoming and incompatible with real grandeur. Colonel Sir Neil Camp-

bell, when I knew him, was a most worthy, sensible man; but it is just possible that being accustomed to Lord Cathcart, and the dignities of this world, he was astounded perhaps at first, and then disgusted, at finding so much of human frailty, of the weaknesses of common life, in a general and a sovereign. The colonel might have been but little surprised to have seen him shoot a grenadier a day. There would besides have been more of dignity in guarding such a Nero; but to find that his prisoner had none of the trappings of legitimate tyranny; that he could not discover one trait in his manner or conversation which affected or gave him a superiority over himself; that he talked freely and playfully on the passages of his former life, and sometimes of his future destination and even projects; that he took no pains to conceal any weakness or error; that he was, in short, altogether such a being as himself; this was intolerable, and would be so to any eye accustomed to contemplate all objects at a certain angle, and to mistake elevation of position for height of stature. Had Napoleon been haughty, morose, reserved, important, and pompous, it would have been easy to recognize and appreciate those kingly characteristics; and to have foreseen and provided against an effort to recover his crown. I was not therefore

much astonished to hear and read the judgment formed by the guardian officer: (difficult as it was to reconcile that judgment, to my mind, so erroneous, with what I formerly knew of Sir Neil Campbell;) but I was truly surprised at some representations contained in the journal alluded to, which I knew could not proceed from his pen, as they furnished the most extraordinary example extant of that species of writing called by Voltaire the *œconomic* style, or an expedient falsification of facts.

The sailors of the Undaunted frigate are stated to have resisted all that cajolement which succeeded with the officers; and to have refused a gratuity offered them at disembarkation by the Emperor, in terms both rude and contemptuous—"they would take none of Mr. Bonaparte's money." Could the writer of the memoir have invented both the refusal and the speech? He should have known that the sailors did receive about four hundred louis d'ors from Napoleon; and that the boatswain, in their name, addressed him on the quarter-deck, in a short harangue, in which he *thanked his honour, and wished him long life and prosperity in the island of Elba, and better luck another time.* The fact is notorious to every man on board the frigate at the time; as to the fiction, I know not to what extent it has been believed or spread.

I should not have mentioned either the one or the other, had I not thought it worth while to give a good sample of the dialectic employed by some pretended champions of the church and state. I exhort you, therefore, to label this pious fraud, as Fra Paoli did his dagger—*stillo dell' ancta chiesa.*

The Quarterly Review has not, as I hear, found more buyers nor admirers since it has undertaken to write down Bonaparte, from authentic documents. Twice has it tried its hand this way; a third time it may show that the conquest of Egypt, of Italy, of Austria, of Prussia, of Poland, the foundation of empires and kingdoms, fifty victories, a thousand monuments of laws, and arts, and arms, all are fictions, unreal, non-existent, and invented, like the pretended death of Charles I. by the jacobins of France, to serve the purpose and animate the wicked zeal of the enemies of the true Porphyrogeniti—the legitimate two or three for whom the modern many were made, and are permitted to exist. The triumph of these gentlemen was at its height: the carcase butchers had carved out the nations at Vienna; Lord Castlereagh having given Saxony to Prussia, Poland to Russia, Italy to Austria, Genoa to Savoy, and Hildesheim to Hanover, was returned to receive the thanks of a grateful British parliament.—

Napoleon reappears—the stability of the system of our great statesman, and its fitness to that portion of Europe called France, are at once apparent, by the resistance offered to the invader: but his lordship, though a little sick and hurt, is not abashed: he speaks for four hours, as if nothing had happened. The night, indeed, of that famous speech *so stuck with laughter as was never goose with lard,* * as Harrington says of my *Lord Epimonus-de-garrula's* harangue, did give hopes to the malicious. It was thought impossible that the patience of parliament should any longer endure. The most tried members, who, during a long course of court complaisance, had never slept nor smiled at a minister's speech, now nodded outright, or bore their murmurs to the club: Westminster-hall and St. James's-street were vocal to the complaints even of the humble servants of the treasury. The most devoted followers began to suspect that the character which one accident had made considerable, another accident might again reduce to its original and tried insignificance. The rats were looking for their holes; some said they had begun to run. But it seems this house is not yet to fall. His lordship has declared his sitting permanent; and having that

* Oceana, p. 120.

immovability which success stamps with the name of perseverance, but which, under other circumstances, is termed obstinacy, or desperation, is resolved to bet his blue ribbon against Napoleon's crown. Now, feeling no interest, and not thinking myself involved in the playing of this match; being convinced likewise that the threatened war is not, as far as England is concerned, national, but ministerial; I have resolved to pursue a journey which I have long projected, and to revisit Paris, in spite of the event which has driven so many of my countrymen, with so much speed and so little urgency, from that capital. I have still hopes of peace, but very little. A saying of the Duke of Wellington circulates at Brussels, that he will be in Paris in three months; and his Grace is not known either to boast or to threaten often in vain. The Prince of Orange has buckled on his armour, and has forbidden the English under his command to say that Bonaparte is a great man. By some accident, no one talks of his father, nor seems to recollect that he was one of the last batch of kings.

His majesty the King of the Netherlands is a sound not yet familiar to Brussels, where the garlands are yet green that adorned his triumphal entry. The town-house and some few houses in the park are hung with stripes of

orange-bunting; and by the edge of the canal leading to the palace of Lâchen is a triumphal arch, recording the reception of Gulielmus Primus. These machines, and the placard of that article of the Vienna Congress by which the Netherlanders were transferred to the house of Nassau, are the only evidences that put you in mind of the new monarchy. If you mention the king, they ask you whether you allude to the old Prince, or to Louis XVIII. His majesty is very kind and condescending:—he received a ball from the citizens' wives the other day, and honoured a puppet show, I speak literally, with his presence. Yesterday he was at the theatre: it was ill-lighted, and worse attended; not a person of apparent gentility was present, to greet the new sovereign. Some thirty stood up in the pit when he entered; but when the play closed, every body moved off without ceremony, not waiting for his majesty's exit. The royal box was surmounted with a paper crown, like that of Shakespeare's Duke of York, which those in the upper lodge looked as if inclined to clip; and the tongues of the lions, supporters of the arms, seemed contrived by the artist to loll out at the bawble above, with an air of archness not justified by heraldry or loyalty. To an eye accustomed to the substantial shows of English royalty, the state of the Dutch monarch cannot but appear most pitiful; and connected with

the very general notion, that, such as it is, it will dissolve at the first thunder of the French cannon, nothing can be less enviable than the condition of William the First—ridiculous as Bubb Doddington on his late peerage—a young king, but an old man.

I have not heard it even surmised that the Belgian troops will stand true to their allies, in case the French should be fortunate in their first attacks; such an opportunity of trying their fidelity was not certainly contemplated when the monarch-makers of Congress first created this kingdom, to satisfy with this bait and the territory of Hildesheim the appetency of English ministers, who might otherwise have easily suspected that there had been nothing paid for sacrificing the interests of Italians, Saxons, Poles, or, in their own language, consolidating the masses of the three mighty monarchies, so necessary for the balance and repose of the European world.

The general disinclination of the Belgians to their union with Holland is acknowledged on all hands. It is not so clear that they are attached to France: but it is no less certain than reasonable, that they would prefer annexation to any power sufficiently strong to carry the war into a foreign territory, instead of fighting for their own borders. The old oppression of Austria would be forgotten, in consideration of

such an advantage. There are certain portions of the world which seem marked out for the perpetual theatre of wars; and the quarrels of civilized Europe have for ages been decided in Saxony, in the northern portions of Italy, or in the Low Countries. But the knowledge of this fact does not reconcile the Flemish to the necessity, at present apparent, of again putting in their claim to this fatal distinction. They have partaken for many years of the protected integrity of the French empire; and, whatever might have been the demands upon their population, or their wealth, the luxurious abundance of their fields (the garden of Europe), their unnumbered flocks and herds, and their thickly scattered villages and farms, bear witness to that boasted inviolability. They suffered little by the retreating or invading armies of the last year; and the rising generation look forward with horror to the approaching contest, which, for the first time to them, must make their country the seat of war. The occupation of Belgium by France was supposed to be the necessary and instant consequence of Napoleon's return. The day was fixed for his arrival at Brussels. It was said to be the demand of the French army and people, and the desire of the Belgians themselves.

The English and Hanoverian troops, assembled in haste on the frontiers, are now in daily

expectation of an advance from the French; and in my visit to Courtray, Tournay, and Ath, a few days past, I found the military arrangements corresponding to such a notion: the towns put into a state of defence to resist a *coup de main*—bridges broken down—the sluices prepared to be cut—a third of each garrison under arms all night—and *orders given to retreat* towards Oudenarde. In Brussels, a fortnight ago, the goods of English tradesmen were hardly offered to be taken by the inhabitant shopkeeper at a fourth of their value; so sure does every one appear to be of the immediate commencement of hostilities, and the certain surrender of Belgium. I know that our military and diplomatic staff expect an instant attack. It will be seen whether we have made any guess at the intentions of Napoleon.

The Belgians, then, see they are to be the prize first fought for; and they wish, I presume, that the struggle may be as short as possible. As to any attachment to their good king, I take that to be out of the question. There has been but one nation in the world, as far as I am aware, notorious for loyalty or love of a sovereign, as such; and that nation has long repented of so mean and unreasonable an attachment. Amongst the evils of an elective monarchy, the most prominent is, that the sovereign, generally speaking, must be agreeable

to the majority only of the nation. When a king is chosen for, instead of by, them, the inconvenience of discord may be thought to be removed; since in that case their dislike or their indifference to his person must be unanimous: yet, by an edict of yesterday, the 7th, the national militia, a large proportion of the male population of the Netherlands, is called out to fight for *leur bon roi*—that is to say, the sacrifice of lives and fortunes, the last effort of despairing patriotism, is required from a whole nation, to justify and make good the will and pleasure of the Vienna statesmen, who signed, sealed, and delivered them over, a mute and unconsulted stock, to swell the subjects of a hateful, a neighbouring, a rival, and a weaker state.

LETTER II.

Paris, April —, 1815.

No obstacle was offered to prevent my arrival at this capital. General Dornberg, at Mons, gave me a passport which carried me to Valenciennes, and which was countersigned at that place for St. Quentin, where the commissary of police again countersigned my paper for Paris. Valenciennes had lately been made a head-quarters, and the regiments of the garrison were parading under the walls as I entered the town. An officer at the post-house informed me, that the Emperor's horses had arrived a few days ago. The same precautions have been taken, I since learn, in all the extremities of the empire; but my Lord Fife is wrong in stating, as I see by the English papers he does, that the Emperor must have left Paris, because his horses had been ordered for him at Compiègne. His lordship's relays were also bespoken eight days before he set off; so that, it seems, this prudent preparation is not confined to Napoleon. Tricoloured flags streamed from the public buildings, and the windows of all the houses, in the frontier towns; and this evidence of the

return of Napoleon was observable in most of the towns and villages, as far as St. Quentin; from which place it appeared to me more sparingly displayed: the church steeples, however, were every where so arrayed. The pass given to me at Valenciennes, by the commissary of the customs, for my baggage, had a permission of entry into the *kingdom:* he took it from my hand, and scratching out that word, which had been obsolete for three weeks, wrote *empire.* Eleven months ago the same scratch was made for me at Calais across the imperial designation of France. But titles change now without any turn of manners; and with the exception that the *fleurs de lys* have disappeared from the newspapers and the pats of butter, I find here but little outward evidence of the great event which has astonished all Europe. Like the hand of a watch, the indication of the movement is most apparent at some distance from the centre. Four-and-twenty couriers have spread the convulsion to the extremity of the Russian world—the wall of China feels the shock—but Paris is tranquil. A citizen of London or Bristol, the course of whose calm existence the commotions of a corn bill are sufficient to interrupt, has little conception how the denizens of less favoured regions can stand uncrushed amidst the fall of mightiest monarchies, and more especially how the current of domestic and social joy

can glide on, unruffled by the storms that darken their whole political horizon. The Englishman, put into a position of danger, is perhaps the most undaunted of his species; but the amusements of a town besieged indicate to his eyes an indifference to danger more than can be expected or even justified in man, and an habitual compound of insensibility and levity, which he is inclined rather to wonder at than admire. He would not know how to believe that on the eve of the bombardment of Dresden there was a ball at the house of the French ambassador, to celebrate the fête of the Queen of Saxony: yet the fact was so, as I heard upon the spot just after the event; and, what is more, the horse of a carriage, drawn up to carry one of the company from the house late in the morning, was killed by the fall of a shell in the court-yard of the same house. There was a play acted at the theatre on the evening after the battle, when the suburbs were reeking with the blood of the dying and the dead. The calamities of twenty-five years, which I date back and ascribe to the first conspiracy of crowned heads at Pilnitz, have made the individuals upon the continent familiar with scenes of blood. They have not, perhaps, become braver, but they have learnt habitually to live, like the inhabitants of Terra del Fuego, amidst lightnings which they consider as distant till they are

struck by them, and the least terrible of which would appear to set our colder sky in an unextinguishable blaze. Tremblingly alive to all political events, from none of which we consider ourselves to be remote, we are astonished at their unconcern for objects which would call all our passions into play: but, although our surprise is natural, their coolness and indifference are but the unavoidable consequences of their position. It is impossible long to support a state of undiminished apprehension; and when dangers become frequent and inevitable, it is the natural resource of every mind to avert its regard rather than to fix it upon the object of alarm. Former experience has taught the citizens of the continent not only that civil and social life will continue their course, in spite of the fall of dynasties and the annihilation of armies, but that their own individual security depends chiefly upon inaction. Thus interest conspires with habit to diminish their solicitude on the most important public events. It seems to me, therefore, unreasonable to condemn what we call the levity of Frenchmen, and that calmness under calamities which we conceive should be exchanged for the settled air of terror or discontent. The nature and method of the revolution, or, as I feel inclined to call it, the restoration which has just taken place, are such as render this placid mien less

extraordinary. You have read the official account of the progress of Napoleon from Cannes to Paris. From every thing I have been able to collect, the whole detail is true to the letter. The Emperor recovered his throne, and travelled to his capital as if returning from his country seat—"*from the Lacedemonian Tarentum.*"

No disturbance of any kind has taken place in Paris. The accounts in the English newspapers, which would make it appear that this capital is as on the day of the *Barricades*, are known by those on the spot to be most ridiculous and malicious forgeries. I see in those honourable channels of ministerial falsehood and folly, that the partisans of Napoleon are insulted in the streets, and ladies, the wives of generals, torn from beneath the windows of the palace by the mob, for wearing imperial purple or violet-coloured robes—that strong guards surround the Tuileries and patrol the streets—that the Emperor never sleeps twice in the same bed—never shews himself without distrust and an ill reception, and takes every precaution against assassination. The whole is untrue from beginning to end—invented either in London by Mr. de Blacas and his worthy stipendiary of the *Times*, or transmitted from hearsay and the reports of the royalists on the coasts of Brittany. The misinformation

of the English journals may well attract the attention of the continental world, and it is impossible to read their representations of the state of things in France and Paris without indignation and contempt, particularly such of them as are stamped with the true image of official effrontery: but what can be expected from men who take as much pains to be ignorant and pertinaciously to avert all fact as others employ to obtain a fair statement of them? A Mons.——a friend of the Bourbons, has been lately employed in the north, to transmit *hopes* for the royal cause. His mission comprehended chiefly the Pas de Calais. His information stated, "that no movements were to be expected from any thing he had seen in that quarter in favour of the ancient dynasty." The reply of his masters conveyed to him "a dissatisfactory reception of his news and a termination of his mission." In politics, as well as war, it has been thought allowable and wise to learn from an enemy; but our statesmen will not be taught even by a fellow countryman and a friend. It is well known even in England, where I first heard it, that when Lord Castlereagh passed through Paris, on his way from Vienna, an

Englishman of his acquaintance, who, from a residence of some months in that city, and an extensive communication with the better informed portion of society, was at least worth listening to, endeavonred to convey to his lordship's ear some truths relative to the condition of France, and the dangerous position of the king. The noble lord in the blue ribbon gave him a hearing, but being told of the increasing discontent of the kingdom, the imprudence of the royal family, the officious treachery of the ministers, and the imminent, the almost inevitable ruin of the restored sovereign, his lordship only remarked, that he wondered at the progress which the king had made in public opinion. Had this well informed person been believed, had he only been heard with attention, a hint, a remonstrance from his lordship might have put the Bourbons upon their guard—Louis had not been lost. But, accustomed to pick politics from the partialities of corresponding colonels and foreign office cypherers, the English minister would not learn any thing through an irregular channel; he scorned to receive intelligence from any one not paid nor interested to deceive him; and instead of attending to the

truth, conveyed, perhaps, a little in the disagreeable form of a lesson, he preferred to hear from Mr. de Blacas, that nothing could exceed the popularity of the French ministry (particularly of the grand master of the robes) and of the king. Thus are empires lost. Those who are acquainted with the composition of our diplomatic body cannot be surprised at the Cimmerian darkness of our reigning English politicians. It cannot be denied that any English cabinet must be exceedingly embarrassed in the selection of their foreign agents, and that, from the necessity of silencing the importunity, and satisfying the demands of those possessed of parliamentary influence, they may run an even chance of excluding whatsoever things are honest, just, true, and of good report from many of our embassies, missions, and correspondencies. Restricted to a choice not amongst the most serviceable, but the best allied of their fellow-countrymen; they ought not to be surprised at occasionally discovering, when too late, that some of their *peregrè missi* have dropped the mode of lying, (allow me the literal translation of Sir Henry Wotton's Latin) comprehended the

old definition, and have deceived only their employers. "*Vides mi fili quam parvâ sapientia regitur mundus,*" was the speech of a great minister to his travelling son; and a young Englishman who is furnished with all his circular letters from Downing-street is likely to make the same remark, although the civilities he may receive in his progress will naturally make him unwilling to point the apothegm of Oxienstern, against an individual who may have been his kind acquaintance, or perhaps his generous host.

I own to you that I do not find it difficult to account for seeing lads, whom we recollect third-rate scholars of fourth forms, hurried from us for their implastic dullness, figuring in ostensible stations; but you must confess to me that the fact is deplorable, and must be productive of the worst consequence to the national interest.

With such inefficient tools it is not then very likely that our government should be celebrated for the management of its foreign relations: it is not to be accounted strange, that in every

court of Europe English diplomacy should be a standing jest, nor that every archive should be filled with documents, every political circle abound with good stories, not at all redounding to the credit of British sense and penetration. We have renewed the times of James the First, when that excellent prince was so profuse of his missions, that the Jesuits of Antwerp, as Howell tells us, compared his hundred thousand ambassadors, and put them in the scale, with the hundred thousand red herrings of Denmark and the hundred thousand cheeses of Holland. The saloons of Vienna, which have lately seen every and each of our living ministers after his kind, still tremble with an universal titter, and, if opportunity should serve, the laugh may spread throughout the whole of Europe. The trick was admirable of sending the Duke of Wellington to interpose his name between the Metternichs, the Hardenbergs, and the Razumowskis, and the sinking credit of the English plenipotentiaries. Pity, however, that his grace had not declined; he might have said, in the words of Gregory Nazianzen—*Non ego cum gruibus simul anseribusque sedebo in synodis.*

There is one perpetual question put to all our countrymen in this place,—how can the English be so entirely ignorant of all that is passing in France? they can hardly be weak enough to believe every thing told in the Austrian Observer or the Brussels Gazette.

I was, indeed, able to procure a clue to one or two extraordinary reports honoured by the notice and belief of our gazetteers. An English woman who keeps a lodging-house in this town informed me that Lille had surrendered, and gone over with 10,000 men to the king, whose entry into Paris was fixed for that day fortnight. She knew it for certain—it was known at the police, the chief of which was her good friend: she had communications with a person at St. Maloes, who sent her accounts of the insurrections in Brittany, and received in return her happy intelligence. It was useless to laugh at the absurdity of the tale, which is now to be seen, with several corroborative facts, in the last bundle of newspapers. I repeat, then, that there is no disturbance of any kind at Paris. The first few days of my arrival there was a collection of spectators under the windows of an apartment, at which Napoleon occansioally

showed himself to the people amidst loud and continual applause; but the Emperor has removed to the Elysée Napoléon, that he may be able to walk in the gardens, in which he is also in the habit of receiving and conferring with his ministers of state.

LETTER III.

Paris, April 24.

I HAVE seen him twice: the first time, on Sunday, the 16th, at the reveiw of the national guards; the second time, at the Français, on the following Friday, April 21, at his first visit to that theatre since his return. Having witnessed the first appearance of the Bourbon Princes last year in front of the national guard and at the same theatre, I am able to make some comparison between the two receptions, and what is called the popularity, of each dynasty. The first occasion was a trial which some of the female partizans of Napoleon appeared to dread. A rumour had gone about that some violence would be attempted against the Emperor's person by the republicans on the day of the review. Several people whispered the suspicion to me, and added, that the deed was to be done by a female. The time naturally selected for the purpose was the moment when the national guards were to be all under arms, as that body, whatever may be their politics, would, it is thought, defend their properties and the peace of the city, rather than fly to the revenge of any

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individual act. I was in the apartments in the Tuileries, allotted to Me La Reine Hortense, who was present at one of the windows, together with some ladies of the court. The beautiful —— was of the party: she manifested the utmost inquietude; told me that she had no alarm from the guards, but was uneasy at the appearance of several people in plain clothes, crowding round the steps of the great porch of the palace, where the Emperor was to mount his horse: however, she recovered herself, and seemed to forget her fears, when the discharges of cannon at the Invalides announced the surrender of Marseilles, and the pacification of the whole empire. By half past one, twenty-four battalions of the guard had marched into the court of the Tuileries. There were no troops of the line or of the Imperial guard under arms on that day, but there were several military men amongst the spectators about the porch, who consisted chiefly of women, and of the above-mentioned persons, apparently of the lower classes. Your friend ——— and myself were, I think, the only gentlemen in plain clothes. We waited silently, and for some time at the window—the anxiety of the ladies was renewed, but instantly dissipated by the shouts of *vive l'Empereur*, which announced that Napoleon was on horseback. He rode off to the left of the line, but the approaching shouts told that he was returning. An officer

rode quickly past the windows, waving his sword to the lines to fall back a little, and shortly afterwards followed Napoleon himself, with his suite, and distinguished, from amidst their waving plumes and glittering uniforms, by the far famed unornamented hat, and his simple coat and single star and cross. He cantered down the lines—as he passed near the spot at which I had placed myself for a better view, he suddenly drew up and spoke to a man in the ranks: an old soldier near me said aloud, without addressing himself to any one, (the tears glistening in his eyes) " see how he stops to read the petition of the meanest of his army." I caught repeated glances of him as he glided through the ranks, at the end of each of which he stopped a short time, as well as before several soldiers in the line, who held out petitions for his acceptation. His progress was announced from right to left and left to right, by continued acclamations. The battalions then moved nearer towards the palace in close order; the gates in front of the triumphal arch were thrown open, and the remaining twenty-four battalions, marching from the *Place du Carousel* into the court, were inspected in the same manner by the Emperor. Afterwards a space was made vacant in the midst of the court, half way between the palace and the triumphal arch. Napoleon advanced thither with his staff drawn round behind him. A large body

of the officers of the national guard then quitted their ranks and rushed towards the Emperor, who addressed them in the speech which you have seen in the Moniteur of the 17th,* and which was frequently interrupted by shouts, and received at the close, when he added, "*vous jurez enfin de tout sacrifier à l'honneur et à l'independance de la France,*" by a thousand voices exclaiming, "we swear." After some thronging and movements, the Emperor wheeled round into an open space, before the porch of the Tuileries, and put himself in front of his staff to review the whole body of the troops who prepared to pass by in columns of companies: two officers of the guard were kind enough to push me forwards within ten paces of him; many of the spectators were about the same distance from him on his right and his left, whilst a whole line of them stood opposite, just far enough to allow the columns to march between them and the Emperor.—The staff were behind; Count Lobau was close upon his left, with his sword drawn: scarcely had a regiment passed when he suddenly threw his foot out of the stirrup, and coming heavily to the ground, advanced in front of his horse, which was led off by an aide-de-camp, who rushed forwards, but was too late to take hold of his stirrup. The marshals and the staff dis-

* See Appendix, No. 1.

mounted, except Count Lobau. A grenadier of the guard, without arms, stood at the Emperor's left hand, a little behind; some spectators were close to his right. The gendarmerie on horseback took but little pains to keep them at a respectful distance. The troops were two hours passing before him; during the whole of which time, any assassin, unless disarmed by his face of fascination, might have shot or even stabbed him. Sir Neil Campbell, who found him so ordinary a being, would hardly forgive me for being thus particular in the description of my first sight of the man, who, without my taking into consideration whether he be "a spirit of health or goblin damned," fixed my eyes, and filled my imagination. The vast palace of kings; the moving array before me; the deep mass of flashing arms in the distance; the crowd around, the apparatus of war and empire, all disappeared, and, in the first gaze of admiration, I saw nothing but Napoleon—the single individual, to destroy whom the earth was rising in arms from the Tanais to the Thames. I know that I never should have beheld him with delight in the days of his despotism, and that the principal charm of the spectacle arose from the contemplation of the great peril to be encountered by the one undaunted mortal before my eyes. Let me say also that the persuasion, that the right of a powerful and great nation to choose their

own sovereign was to be tried in his person, and the remembrance of the wonderful achievement by which he had given an opportunity to decide that choice contributed in no small degree to augment my satisfaction. He has been of late often seen and described by those who visited him at Elba. I can only say, that he did not appear to me like any of his portraits, except that one in the saloon of the palace of the legislative body, nor did I ever see any man just like him. His face was of a deadly pale; his jaws overhung, but not so much as I had heard; his lips thin, but partially curled, so as to give to his mouth an inexpressible sweetness. He had the habit of retracting the lips, and apparently chewing, in the manner observed and objected to in our great actor, Mr. Kean. His hair was of a dark dusky brown, scattered thinly over his temples: the crown of his head was bald. One of the names of affection given him of late by his soldiers is "*notre petit tondu.*" He was not fat in the upper part of his body, but projected considerably in the abdomen, so much so, that his linen appeared beneath his waistcoat. He generally stood with his hands knit behind or folded before him, but sometimes unfolded them: played with his nose; took snuff three or four times, and looked at his watch. He seemed to have a labouring in his chest, sighing or swallowing his spittle.

He very seldom spoke, but when he did, smiled, in some sort, agreeably. He looked about him, not knitting but joining his eye-brows as if to see more minutely, and went through the whole tedious ceremony with an air of sedate impatience. As the front columns of each regiment passed him, he lifted the first finger of his left hand quickly to his hat, to return the salute, but did not move either his hat or his head. As the regiments advanced, they shouted, some loudly, some feebly, "*vive l'Empereur*," and many soldiers ran out of their ranks with petitions, which were taken by the grenadier on the Emperor's left hand: once or twice, the petitioner, afraid to quit his rank, was near losing his opportunity, when Napoleon beckoned to the grenadier to step forward and take his paper. A little child, in true French taste, tricked out in regimentals, marched before one of the bands, and a general laugh ensued. Napoleon contrived to talk to some one behind him at that moment, that the ridicule might not reach, nor be partaken by him. A second child, however, of six years old perhaps, dressed out with a beard like a pioneer, marching in front of a regiment, strode directly up to him with a petition on the end of a battle-axe, which the Emperor took and read very complacently. Shortly after an ill-looking fellow, in a half suit of regimentals, with a sword by his side, ran from the crowd of spectators,

opposite or from amidst the national guards, I could not see which, and rushed directly towards the Emperor. He was within arm's length, when the grenadier on the left and an officer jumped forwards, and, seizing him by the collar, pushed him farther back. Napoleon did not move a muscle of his body; not a line, not a shade of his face shifted for an instant. Perfectly unstartled, he beckoned the soldiers to let loose their prisoner; and the poor fellow approaching so close as almost to touch his person in front, talked to him for some time with eager gestures, and his hand on his heart. The Emperor heard him without interruption, and then gave him an answer, which sent him away apparently much satisfied with his audience. I see Napoleon at this moment. The unruffled calmness of his countenance, at the first movement of the soldier, relaxing softly into a look of attention and of kindness, will never be erased from my memory. We are not stocks, nor stones, nor Tories. I am not ashamed to say, that on recovering from my first surprise, I found my eyes somewhat moistened; a weakness that never fails to overpower some persons, when alone and unrestrained by ridicule, at the perusal of any trait of unmixed heroism, especially of that undaunted tranquillity of mind, which formed and finished the master-spirits of antiquity.

During the review, hearing a movement amongst his staff, he turned round, and seeing that it arose from a very pretty countrywoman of ours, whom one of his aide-de-camps was placing near him, replied to her curtsies with a very low bow.

The last regiment of the national guards was followed by ninety boys of the Imperial Lyceum, who came rushing by shouting, and running, many of them out of their ranks, with petitions. Then, for the first time, Napoleon seemed delighted; he opened his mouth almost to a laugh, and turned round to his attendants on the right and left with every sign of satisfaction. These youths wished to fight the last year at the defence of Paris, and they are now again enrolled. The school-boys throughout France are enthusiastically attached to the Emperor, who has perfected that system of military education, of which it is, however, a great mistake to suppose him the inventor. The schools in France were to a certain degree always intended to be nurseries of the army. They owe their amelioration, and adaptation to this great object, originating in the genius of the people, rather than any bent of this or that individual, to the efforts of the republicans, followed up by those of Napoleon. All the young men, with the exception of those amongst the debauched representatives of the noble houses,

whose hopes were revived during the restoration, are in favour of Napoleon, at least of the new order of things, in opposition to the re-establishment of the ancient regime. The class of men wanting in France, and supposed to have been melted down in the war, are those of about forty years of age; there is a fine rising generation, and that decidedly against the royal cause. Silver hairs are suspected by the new court; one of whom talking to me one day, and seeing an old gentleman come in, instantly changed the conversation from politics, observing, in broken English, "Say no more; you guess what his opinions are by the colour of his hair."

Immediately after the boys of the Lyceum had passed, he retired to the palace, ran quickly, after his fashion, up stairs, and received his court. They were chiefly military men, and members of the Institute. Amongst the former I saw a general of brigade, whose complexion would have secured him against advancement in the army, and admission into the court of any of the legitimate sovereigns of Christendom,—he was a negro.

The reception given to Napoleon on this dreaded day was certainly of a mixed kind. The national guards, all of them shopkeepers, and who have been great gainers by the short peace, consider the return of Napoleon as the signal of war; they did not, therefore, hail

him universally nor very loudly. Some regiments, however, shouted loud and long, and raised their caps on their bayonets; and this enthusiasm I have no doubt would be expressed by all these armed citizens, if they had as good a chance of a state of peace under the Emperor as under another government; for they all cling to his palaces, his walks, his galleries, his columns, his triumphal arches, his bridges, fountains, and quays, and all the imperial embellishments of the capital: and, also, they all lament, where they do not hate, the imprudence of the royal family and the advisers of the king, which, to say the truth, I have never heard a single attempt to deny or to defend.

The Sunday before this scene Napoleon reviewed the imperial guard, when, as may be easily conceived, the gratification on both sides was more apparent and more pure. The soldiers gave a loose to their delight, and the Emperor to his satisfaction at their joy: he kissed the eagles of his Elbese guard. The lady before alluded to informed me, that being close to him, she saw his eyes glisten with joy, and heard him say, as he was looking at the grenadiers in front, to Marshal Bertrand—"*et, ils ne voudraient pas se servir de tels gens—quels bêtes!!*" alluding to the conduct of the Bourbon princes, with a reference to this magnificent corps.

As to Napoleon's reception at the *Français,*

it is impossible to give any idea of the joy by which he was hailed. The house was choaked with spectators, who crowded into the orchestra. The play was Hector. Previously to the rising of the curtain the airs of La Victoire and the Marseillaise were called for and performed amidst thunders of applause, the spectators joining in the burthen of the song. An actor of the Feydeau rose in the balcony and sung some occasional words to the Marseillaise, which were received in raptures, and accompanied by the whole house at the end of each verse. The enthusiasm was at its utmost pitch. Napoleon entered at the third scene. The whole mass rose with a shout which still thunders in my ears. The *vives* continued till the Emperor, after bowing to the right and left, had seated himself, and the play was recommenced. The audience received every speech which had the least reference to their returned hero with unnumbered plaudits. The words "*enfin il reparoit,*" and "*c'etoit lui,*"—*Achille,* raised the whole parterre, and interrupted the actor for some moments. Napoleon was very attentive: whilst I saw him he spoke to none of those who stood behind him, nor returned the compliments of the audience: he withdrew suddenly at the end of the play, without any notice or obeisance, so that the multitude had hardly time to salute him with a

short shout. As I mentioned before, I saw the Bourbon princes received, for the first time, in the same place last year. Their greeting will bear no comparison with that of Napoleon, nor will any of those accorded to the heroes of the very many ceremonies I have witnessed in the course of my life. Mr. Talma played Hector in his usual powerful style, and having mentioned the name of this great actor, I cannot forbear adding a story I heard from him, which shews that Napoleon has some ability in turning a kind compliment. At the first meeting between the Emperor and actor since the return from Elba, the former, addressing him with his usual familiarity, said, "so, Talma, Chateaubriand says that you gave me lessons how to act the Emperor: I take his hint as a compliment, for it shews I must at least have played my part well."

The intimacy between the master and the scholar has been of long standing: the reputation of the former was established when the latter was scarcely known, and the young officer accepted of admissions for the theatre from his acquaintance. At that time one of the principal amusements of the two friends, together with that of a third person, a Mr. Le Noire, afterwards a general, was the relation of stories of ghosts and old castles, into which (the candles being extinguished) the future conqueror

of Europe entered with all his heart, and was seriously offended when his companions interrupted him by tripping up his chair, shaking the table, or any other practical pleasantry. It may be of more importance to add that Napoleon has never dropped the intimacy of his former histrionic patron, nor failed to remember the free admissions and repay his present exertions by an unlimited credit on the imperial purse. The royal vice of ingratitude finds no place in the bosom of an usurper; this baseness belongs to such as are born kings. There is something magical in that power of personal attachment which is proved by a thousand notorious facts to belong to this extraordinary man; and never had one who wore a crown so many friends, nor retained them so long.

LETTER IV.

Paris, April 27.

I SEE that the politicians of England still choose to consider the dethronement of Louis as the effect of a sudden act of daring violence and deep laid treason, and to bewail the lot of seven and twenty millions of honest men who have been thus transferred from the paternal sway of the best of princes to the iron yoke of a military despot. It is possible, however, that the French are themselves almost as good judges of their own position as the politicians of England, and that the reason why they have submitted to this fatal change of masters is, that they have other opinions than their rival neighbours as to the expediency of the late revolution.

The manner in which the imperial throne has been recovered made me, even whilst in England, suspicious that the stories of the treason and preparatory schemes, by which the design of the ex-emperor was made feasible and finally brought to bear, were devoid, for the most part, of foundation; invented by those

friends of the Bourbons who were unwilling to attribute the fall of Louis to his imprudence and their own misconduct; and believed by such as, in spite of all historical deduction, are determined to seek the origin of every great event in deep-laid and widely-organised combinations. It is not to be denied that there is still a considerable mystery hanging over some of the circumstances which contributed to the success of this wonderful exploit, and that no one appears to know at Paris how far the secret was originally spread, or to what extent any previous conspiracy might fairly be said to prevail. Having taken, however, considerable pains to ascertain the fact, I am come into that persuasion which prevails most generally amongst those who have the reputation of being the best informed; which is, that there was no corresponding scheme laid at Paris for this restoration, and that the whole project and execution are to be attributed solely to the daring determination of Napoleon himself to recover his crown, most happily coinciding with the actual condition and general feeling of France. What was that condition and that general feeling it is likely that the exile at Elba well knew. He might be informed of this even by the public papers, had he not been possessed of correspondents at Paris and agents at Naples. But what I mean

to assert is, that there was no conspiracy in France corresponding with the disembarkation at Cannes. The Grand Marshal Bertrand, the *preux chevalier* of Europe, gave his word and honour to an English gentleman only yesterday, that no such conspiracy existed; and that three weeks before their quitting Elba not the least idea was entertained of the design. The Emperor himself, whose assurance you may receive with suspicion, told Mr. S—— as much, in a conversation he had with him in the garden of the Elysée, and, on being complimented on the performance of this, the greatest of all his actions, he said, "No, it was easier than you think; my only merit was making a good guess as to the actual situation of France." I have been assured from one of the persons concerned in the affair, that even the movement of D'Erlon and Lefebvre Desnouettes was originally contrived independently of the landing at Cannes, although the coincidence of time made it subsidiary to that effort. The original scheme was to create an insurrection among the troops. Desnouettes was to have galloped through Paris at the head of a regiment of cavalry, proclaiming the republic and the downfal of the Bourbons, who were to have been arrested, and, in case of resistance, destroyed. It is certain that many thousand papers were distributed at the beginning of March, stating that the king would fall, and

the republic be established; even a date was fixed for this great event, the 16th of March. You will recollect, that during the last Christmas, there was an apprehension of some treasonable designs, and that the guards were doubled in Paris. With these movements Napoleon could have no connection. Indeed, I know that he heard the first account of them from an English gentleman, a friend of mine, at Elba. It is currently reported here, that the Emperor has complained to Fouché, that the revolutionary spirit in France, being prematurely brought to a head, obliged him to take advantage of the general feeling three months sooner than he should have wished, and whilst the armies of the allies were still in a position to recommence operations against France. In England, Marshal Soult is supposed to have been deeply concerned, and to have assisted materially in the plot. I learn here that, on the contrary, that officer had some scheme for his own aggrandisement; and that he took no pains to diminish the discontents of the soldiery, who, he was in hopes, might be induced, in case of actual insurrection, to make choice of a general so well known as himself. It is certain, that he has not as yet been received at the Emperor's court, although it is thought that he is finally to have some great employ. The manner in which he was treated during the last days of the king's

reign, notwithstanding that it throws suspicion on his intentions, is sufficient to shew that nothing could be decidedly proved against him.

The treason of Marshal Ney was not in consequence of any preconcerted scheme. The marshal, when he left Louis, had not any intention of betraying him; nor did he adopt the line of conduct so justly condemned, until he found the troops at Lons le Saulnier had determined upon joining the Emperor: when they were ordered by him on the parade to march against Napoleon, they replied by shouts of laughter and cries of *vive l'Empereur*. Nevertheless, the marshal had actually made every disposition for a movement against his ancient master.* He was weak enough not to do the only thing left for an honourable man: instead of returning to Paris with the news, he marched with the revolted army, and has branded his name with an infamy that even the success of his cause has failed to obliterate. He has no ostensible employ at the Emperor's court, excepting a military command; and although he is known to be a very brave man, and has the character of a very weak one, is regarded by all parties as a disreputable acquaintance. In London lan-

* I learnt this afterwards on the spot from an Englishman, settled as a commissary at Dole, who received the marshal's orders. This, written long before his trial, has been proved by the detail of that event.

guage "he is cut," and his name and crime have furnished a pun for the Parisian wits, who say of his treachery, "*il faut être né pour ça.*" Colonel Henry Labedoyere went over with his regiment to Napoleon from the impulse of the moment, and, as I know from the officer of Napoleon's suite who received the first intelligence of his coming, without the least previous intimation being conveyed to the Emperor. In short, I have been unable to learn the time, place, circumstances, or names connected with any conspiracy to favour the landing at Cannes, and I conceive that all suspicion of correspondence with that attempt will be reduced, at last, to the discontent circulated rather freely in certain saloons at Paris, amongst the relations and known adherents of the former imperial court. To my mind, the very magnitude of the enterprise, and the facility with which it was executed, which induce some people to look upon the restoration as the effect of a plot laid at Paris, and branching out in a thousand ramifications into the provinces, are presumptive proofs, that when Napoleon quitted the isle of Elba, he was aware that no provision had been made for his reception, and that all he had to trust to was his own activity and resolution, and the unpopularity of the reigning dynasty both with the army and the people. The refusal of the garrison of Antibes to join him

is a sufficient proof that the defection of the other troops, afterwards, was not preconcerted, but merely the effect of a spontaneous preference of their ancient chief to their new master. It is true that the soldiers had preserved their tri-coloured cockade, as also that the violet, at Paris, was afterwards said to be the sign adopted by the partisans of the imperial government. It is no less a fact that Napoleon, in his conversations at Elba, talked vaguely of remounting the throne of France; but these things only prove that a portion of the French nation had a persuasion that the reign of the Bourbon dynasty could not be durable, and that the Emperor indulged the same notion: they do not prove any conspiracy in France, which had for its object to second the landing at Cannes.

I am inclined to believe that, not more than a fortnight previously to the arrival of Napoleon on the coast, some effort had been made, and discovered, to prepare the garrison of Antibes for that event; and that Mr. de Bouthilliers, prefect of the Var, transmitted a communication upon that subject to the Abbé Montesquiou, minister of the interior, who paid no attention to the information. The story was told me in England, and confirmed to me the other day in Flanders, by an English officer, to whom the Duke de Berri had imparted the fact, add-

ing that the letter from the prefect had been found unopened on Montesquiou's table three weeks after its receipt. Some agents and transactions in Italy, previously to the landing, are now said to have been discovered three months ago, by a British consul resident at one of the Italian ports. This fact, if true, may only go to prove the borrowing of money, or an attempt to become acquainted with the state of the public mind on the continent. No conspiracy will ever be proved, for no conspiracy ever existed.* To what, then, attribute the precipitate fall of the king? Not to his own personal imbecility, for the weakest sovereign would have found one friend;—not to the magic name of Napoleon, for that could not have subdued the honest and the brave, united in an honourable cause!—not even to any decided choice arising from gratitude or affection for their former monarch, for there was no time for deliberation. Let me ask, whether you think that Napoleon solved the question in his speech to the national guards?—"The royal throne was not suitable for France. It gave to the people no security for their most precious interests. It had been imposed by a foreign power. Had it existed it would have been a monument of

* Since the restoration of Louis a pamphlet has been written to prove it, but it has not adduced a single fact.

misfortune and of disgrace."—The comment upon which assertion as delivered to me by an imperialist, who has, however, a character of impartiality, I proceed to communicate. 'The people, sensible that they were in no way interested in the preservation of this throne, as might be expected, did nothing to defend it; and regarding the daring attempt of a man who united so many personal advantages to what they esteemed a national cause, as the most decisive means of putting the royal authority to the test, they determined at least to remain inactive until the question should be fairly tried between the respective armed force of each party. Thus was Napoleon suffered to invade a kingdom in a carriage. When they found that the royal army assembled only to join the invader—that the enthroned princes could hardly retreat so rapidly as the exiled usurper advanced —that the household troops, the last hope of Louis, had melted away before the music of the imperial guard—that the king himself, despairing of his cause and his country, had retired from his throne—it was natural that they should no longer hesitate to declare themselves in favour of the restored sovereign, now left without a competitor. When their brothers of the capital, those who had shared the favours of the king, who partook of his wealth and honour, who bore his arms, had not lifted a hand in his

defence, were the provinces to support a cause already lost? The only resistance made for the Bourbons, by the Duke of Angoulême, soon subsided when the troops under his command were informed of the peaceable possession of the capital by Napoleon; when they recognized the restored energy of the new government in the efforts of Grouchy; and moreover when they saw the intercepted letters by which the Duke and Duchess of Angoulême had written for Spanish troops to assist in quelling the *insurrection.* Those letters destroyed the only chance, small as it was, of making the cause of the Bourbons the cause of the people in the south. The attempt to call down a foreign and ferocious military upon France awakened, in an instant, all the feelings of indignation attached to the Bourbon princes, and, more particularly, to that branch of the family supposed most alienated from the sentiments and unacquainted with the interests of the country. There is a story current here that the duchess, when at Bourdeaux, and hearing the proposals of some officers in reference to the royal cause, exclaimed—"*plus de vos belles paroles! messieurs, je veux du sang*;" and that the speech, being repeated to Napoleon, made him say that the princess was the only man of the family. Indeed her conduct has obtained her at Paris, amongst the royalists, the name of the Joan of

Arc of 1815 : but it is not to be expected that her energy in her own cause should obtain her the affection of those who were to suffer by its success; or, in other words, that her demand for blood should endear her to those from whom it was to flow.:'—so far said my imperialist. The consequence of the publication of the duchess's letter to Spain was as might be expected. The royal army of about eight thousand had been successful at Lauriol against General Debelle, had forced the Isère, and was in march towards Lyons. It consisted of the 10th regiment of the line, the 1st foreign regiment, the 14th cavalry chasseurs, the 83d regiment of the line, ten pieces of cannon, and regularly organized battalions of the national guard and royal volunteers. Lyons was in no state of defence, having a garrison of little more than three hundred soldiers. General Grouchy could immediately oppose only the 6th regiment of the line to the duke, and order the 58th regiment to be sent to join him in haste. But the force which he employed against the regular troops of this prince was the people. He declared Lyons in a state of siege —he armed the fauxbourgs—he made an appeal to the surrounding population. It is said, I see, in the English papers, that this great town is decidedly royalist; on the contrary, its inhabit-

ants tore up the flag-stones to oppose the royal army, the national guards crowded to the imperial standard, and the regiments 83d and 14th having quitted him, the duke endeavoured only to escape; but his army diminished so rapidly, that, unable to force a passage, he surrendered himself to the first officer that marched to his attack. The military dispositions of Napoleon's general were unnecessary; the national guards, indignant that the Spaniards were invited to give a preponderance to the inclination of either party, decided the fate of the Bourbon prince, who, whilst his wife was calling in the guerillas of Spain, had announced to Marshal Massena his intention to deliver Toulon to the English. And you in England wonder that the cause of the Bourbons should be looked upon in France as a foreign cause, and that it is possible to prefer the monster Napoleon to the mild Louis. It is hardly necessary to observe, that if Louis, if his government were actually such as they are supposed by our English politicians to have been, and were the opinions formed by them of Napoleon and his system at all correct, such a preference would have been unnatural, would have been impossible. If you ask me for my opinion, it is, that the friends of the present imperial dynasty are right in saying that the Bourbons are rejected by the vast majority of

the nation. I believe that the rejection would not have been so sudden and decisive had it not been matured by Napoleon; but I believe it would have been as fully displayed and more certainly secured.

The circumstances under which the Bourbons were restored could not procure them the previous love of Frenchmen. The present government have been just enough to own that it was impossible these princes should not commit faults.—*Nous n'entrons point ici,* say they, in the Moniteur of the 18th, *dans le detail immense des fautes qu'ils ont commises; il leur était impossible de n'en pas commettre, on aurait pu les compter d'avance.* But though the ministers of Napoleon may wish to make it appear that the royal government, under any circumstances, was incompatible with the honour and interests of France, we may presume to suppose that the king might have pursued a line of conduct which would have fixed the crown upon his head, and rendered abortive any attempt to replace it on that of his dethroned predecessor. I do not say that the wisdom necessary for such conduct was much to be expected in a sovereign of sixty, unacquainted with the moral position of his subjects. But much had been said of the good sense and the instructed mind of the king, and it was to be hoped that he would have avoided the gross errors into which

the events of his flight, and even his own confession, prove him too clearly to have fallen. His position was difficult, but his difficulties were not inextricable. His subjects, to be sure, were not of such a disposition as might enable him to expect a lenient judgment upon his wanderings; they were not the Frenchmen who respected the boots of a Bourbon, or who wept and prayed at the maladies of Louis the Fifteenth. If he could not challenge their esteem for his virtues, he was to hope no pardon nor toleration for his mistakes. Now that he is fallen, it is natural that, although the government has refused the task, some one should enter into the detail, *however immense*, of these mistakes; and, in fact, there have not been wanting those who have favoured their cotemporaries with a regular indictment, of many counts, drawn up against his late majesty, and who have endeavoured to give some rational account of the causes which led to the total abandonment of the Bourbons. It is certainly necessary to distinguish between those faults, however real, discovered since the dethronement, and those whose existence was recognised, and was the subject of complaint, previously to that event; and which, therefore, may be supposed to have more immediately contributed to its completion—neither will any impartial man suffer his judgment to be sunk under the weight or num-

ber of evidences produced hitherto almost *ex parte*, in a time when it is not probable that there should be many nor very strenuous defenders of the contrary cause: not that no defenders have been found, for I have this instant before my eyes two pamphlets, one of which bears the title of *Apologie de Louis XVIII.*, and the other, *Discussion des Torts qu'on impute à Louis XVIII. des Intentions qu'on lui suppose, et Réfutations des Reproches qui lui sont addressés.*

In endeavouring to give some account of the defects of the royal government I must premise, that it is not my intention to examine how far the king himself may be personally arraigned, or how far only his family and ministers are to be considered the cause of public discontent. The voice of all parties agrees to give the title of a good sort of man to Louis; and Napoleon himself, in conversation with a friend of mine at Elba, applied to him the usual commendation—"*c'est un brave homme, trop bon pour les Français,*" adding, also, what I shall not here comment upon, "*et moi, j'etois trop bon.*" I am inclined, however, to think that the fault by general consent being thrown upon some branches of the family and upon certain of the ministers, it is rather in compliance with decency, and a tacit compact, than from any conviction arising from a knowledge

of facts, that the partizans of the present government and system have agreed in calling Louis only a weak monarch. The Duchess of Angoulême is charged with the errors arising from superstition, and the Duke of Berri with those consequent upon an undue disregard of the army; as if the king himself was not apparently, at least, a devotee, and had not recalled the Swiss guards. We must be just, even to these scions of royalty, who have not to accuse themselves of any conduct confessedly displeasing to the king, or discountenanced by him. His majesty may seem, indeed, to have displayed an address hardly amiable, in diverting the public odium from himself, and to have exercised a quality which, as may be deduced from the hints of enemies and friends, he possesses in an eminent degree. It is impossible to say whether, under more prosperous circumstances, he would not have drawn a benefit from, and founded his whole course of system upon, that very line of conduct adopted by his family and his ministers, which himself and his personal partizans are now said sincerely to condemn.*

The Count of Artois never acceded to the constitutional charter until the moment of peril: yet, surely it was the duty of the king to insist upon the prince assenting to the ob-

* See Appendix, No. 2.

servance of that constitution, which, if he meant to give only for himself, without binding even his immediate successor, he had done enough to insult and betray the French nation. More could not be wanted to cause his crown to pass away from him. It is universally suspected, that the princes, heirs to the throne, had, in reserve, as a title to future despotism, their non-signature of this charter; and as that policy, which was seen and understood by all Paris, could not escape the observation, so ought it to have met with the decided resentment, of the king. The royal family of France, like some of our great houses, who contrive to have one honest oppositionist amongst them in case of emergencies, were resolved to profit by a diversity of sentiment, and to find in their own body a patron for the increasing adherents of the ancient civil system. Some go the length of asserting that Louis could not be friendly to a free constitution, the continuation of which he took no pains to secure beyond the term of his own reign; and they add, that he began his career with an open violation of the conditions upon which he was called to ascend the throne of France. He accepted at Hartwell the terms which he disputed at St. Ouen; and, indeed, I myself recollect perfectly well, that on the morning of his entry into Paris, it was a question amongst some zealous royalists, whether

his Majesty would condescend to grace the triumph of the day, unless upon the express retraction on the part of the existing chambers of the conditions which they had been insolent enough, originally, to exact from their lawful monarch. You have read the letters on this subject in the Moniteur of the 15th of this month, and must there see how early the conspiracy was begun against the people. Louis did enter boldly, declaring that he reserved the right of nominating or rejecting certain articles of the constitution, which, when in England, he had swallowed whole. It is a most absurd pretext of panegyric of this monarch, that he bestowed upon France the constitutional charter: as if the chambers and provisional government had not previously demanded such a guarantee for national liberty, and as if, after acceding to, he had not shamefully disregarded, this guarantee. Mr. Carnot is right; the commerce and intercourse between princes and people consist in a perpetual struggle for the increase and retrenchment of power: kings have never *willingly* encroached upon their own sovereignty, nor made their people more free at the expense of their own prerogatives. Liberty has always been wrung from their hard hands—no thanks to them—and all the benefits of this kind ever conferred by a sovereign should be called by their true name, the extor-

tion of a right rather than the grant of a favour. When King John was forced to make some few provisions for the happiness of his subjects, he complained to his brother potentates that he had been robbed. Louis, like all other monarchs, seems to have looked upon his people as if they had surrendered at discretion to him; and as if, therefore, even his inactivity was a generous forbearance, whilst his dispositions for what they might think something like their independence should be regarded as an instance of bounty and benevolence unexampled and undeserved. Follow me through another letter, and you shall see this bounty and benevolence, and "to what they mount."

LETTER V.

Paris, April —.

THE people in all countries are liable and apt to betray themselves by their generous feelings; and even if in any multitude there be only a small proportion in whom these feelings predominate, that minority will generally become preponderate, by the mere force of shame, which forbids opposition to actions that have for their pretext and origin motives universally approved and admired by the moral sense of mankind. This, in the struggle between kings and subjects, gives an infinite advantage to the former party, who can make use of, and appeal to, every passion of the human breast; can take advantage of all good as well as all bad dispositions in others, whilst they themselves, acting from one only feeling and character of mind, are the better enabled steadily to pursue a single, unvarying, scheme of action. The abhorrence of anarchy, and the facilities afforded by the modern prejudices in favour of a monarchical government, are considerations so powerful in the state of civiliza-

tion to which the European world has long arrived, that the dethronement of one king is generally followed by the election of another, whose successor, if set aside, may be replaced by the heir of the former unfortunate monarch. It is impossible but that a favourable feeling should exist towards a sovereign ascending the throne under these circumstances; and on that account I consider the reign of a revolutionary or a restored king as likely to prove very dangerous to liberty, although he may have owed his crown to the most noble exertion of the rights of man. The person in this predicament is regarded either with gratitude for what he has done to second the people, or with fondness, if he has done nothing, as being their own choice; and, if he be adroit, can easily turn either of these affections to his own account: still more easy is his task, if he assume his authority upon the implied consent and apparent necessities of a nation, as the only close and cure of anarchy. Excepting the English, I know of no nation that have been wise enough to guard against their gratitude, and to depose one king without investing another with all or more of that authority which they found intolerable in his predecessor. The patriots of 1688 were able to control their sense of obligation, and were too sensible and just to lose by the encourage-

ment of one virtuous propensity those advantages which their other good and great qualities had set within their reach. They regarded King William as sufficiently recompensed by the crown of three kingdoms, restricted according to their wishes, for all his great services; and the discontent and disgust which their conditions excited, even in this great and liberal prince, are a sufficient proof that there is in all those who have tasted of sovereign sway a strange notion of a certain right of dominion, either inherent in their persons or acquired by their exploits, which neither good sense, great virtue, nor long experience, productive otherwise of the most generous principles and rational maxims, are able completely to eradicate and wholly to destroy—strange persuasion! as if any possible benefit conferred upon me should tempt me to resign the smallest portion of that freedom of action which is necessary for individual dignity, and which is found, by the fact of its existence, not incompatible with the social interests of the nation to which I belong!! In this case I lose by the deposition of my tyrant; I exchange my just hatred and honourable opposition to despotism for an acquiescence in it, nay, even for a love for it, in the person of another, whom my own necessities and his good qualities have induced me to call to my aid! The English, in bargaining with William, had

the advantage of knowing, by very recent experience, how much they must gain by bestowing the crown upon one who, having none of the absurd but powerful pretensions of legitimacy, should be able to plead no rights nor pretexts not conveyed by themselves and created by their own sole choice. They could not fail to be aware how indispensable was their duty to repress all those favourable inclinations, all that confidence and affection towards their new monarch, which had delivered the nation, bound, as it were, hand and foot, into the power of a base, revengeful, and vicious tyrant. I have sometimes doubted my eyes, in reading the charge to the jury on the trial of the regicides, by Sir Orlando Bridgeman, thinking it impossible to recognise in the slavish doctrine therein laid down as the law and constitution of England the avowed sentiments of an individual, distinguished by his dignity and character, belonging to a nation which had afforded so splendid an example of hatred and resistance of despotism. The sufferings which the country had endured from her internal struggles might have induced this judge to cite, and his audience to hear with complacency, those statutes and legal opinions which were built upon the divine right and uncontrolable power of kings; but the fact that those ridiculous and wicked pretensions should have been supported in face of a nation

who had just given them such a practical disproof, and the observation of the consequences which ensued from their admission as just maxims of government, may serve as a perpetual lesson to all nations, and should have taught the French in 1814 with what cautions, and reserves, and conditions, to receive a monarch, who might look upon his ascent to the throne as a restoration and the recovery of a right. Louis lost no time in displaying to his subjects his determination to be considered as their legitimate monarch, restored to the throne in the twentieth year from the date of the period at which he had been called to the hereditary possession of the crown of France. It cannot be denied that the first check given to the enthusiasm produced by the return of the Bourbons was by this silly enumeration of the nineteen years during which Louis had reigned over his titular kingdom *in partibus infidelium*. The king had been fairly called to the throne by the only power then representing the French nation; he did not, certainly, possess it by the right of conquest, obtained either by his own armies or those of the sovereign allies—for army he had none. The Count of Artois had been neither seconded by the people nor recognised by the foreign princes; and only fifteen days before the taking of Paris these princes were willing to secure the dynasty of Napoleon by an honourable peace;

and after that event they had treated with the provisional government, and had declared that France was free in her choice of a sovereign. It has not yet appeared that the calling Louis XVIII. to the throne was the only condition upon which peace was to be given to France; so that the new monarch should have attributed some share, at least, of his right to the choice of his countrymen. Whatever had been his opinions as to the extent of the force and necessity which influenced his election, it is inconceivable how he should have refused to introduce, were it only as a rhetorical flourish, only one word about the unanimous wish and election of eight and twenty millions of his countrymen, and have lost sight of the whole French nation in his grateful remembrance of God, the Prince Regent, and his own hereditary rights. The Count of Artois deigned to thank the senate *de ce qu'il a fait pour le bonheur de la France, en rappelant son souverain legitime*, but assumed a false position in the very terms by which he expressed the obligations of France for the *recal* of *her legitimate* sovereign. In the same manner when Louis wrote his proclamation dated January, 1814, at Hartwell, although he announced his wish to hold by the efforts of *his subjects* that throne to which *his rights* and their love could alone give strength, he showed he was already king, and

had inherited certain subjects and peoples, out of which he was kept by the incumbent owner. By the constitution of the 6th of April, 1814, Louis Stanislaus Xavier was freely called to the throne of France, and *was to be proclaimed king of the French* when he should have signed and accepted that constitution by a solemn act and oath. Under the presumption that he would accept the proposed terms, his brother was appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and himself suffered to arrive at St. Ouen, where he refused his assent to the constitution, and by his declaration of the 2d of May declared himself King of France and Navarre, by the grace of God. By thus eluding the subscription to the act which called him to the throne, he only behaved in conformity with his former opinions, which prompted him to protest against the acceptation of the constitution of 1791 by Louis XVI., and to declare by his letter to the sovereigns in 1804, all the acts illegal which had been promulgated since the opening of the states-general in France. "*Je déclare donc, après avoir au besoin renouvelé mes protestations contre tous les actes illégaux qui,* depuis l'ouverture des états-généraux de France, *ont amené la crisé effrayante.*" These are his very words; these words should have been recollected by Frenchmen when they deliberated on the choice of a king. It must be confessed, however, that the senate,

having once resolved upon Louis, took every precaution in their power to guard the nation from the reassumption of rights which had been acknowledged obsolete by all the powers of Europe, in their several treaties with France since the period of the revolution. They could not, it seems, in the then state of France, prevent the king from arriving at St. Ouen; and if he dared, previously to his entry, to throw off the mask, the disgrace should not in fairness attach to those who were betrayed, but to the deceiver himself. The king's title cannot rest upon any other right than that given him by the constitution of the 6th of April, which annexed as a condition, *sine qua non*, the acceptance of this constitution; so that, supposing the senate to have had no power to act for the nation—supposing them to have been as they are now called in France, a handful of traitors, Louis was never lawful king of France: but supposing the senate to have represented and acted upon the known wish of the people, and so to have had a right to call Louis to the crown, it is clear, that if the king never fulfilled the only condition annexed to his election, he was also, in that point of view, at no time lawful king of France. I use the word *lawful*, in contradistinction to the term *legitimate*, which seems to have been lately adopted to distinguish the bastard pretensions of election from

that mysterious, hereditary, innate, unalienable, incorruptible right, which, mortal as to its birth, partakes of the godhead in its eternal duration—

"Its foot in earth, its forehead in the skies;"

which although not without a beginning, is yet sure, and promised, to last for ever and ever. If you believe in this miraculous property and attribute of certain royal races, you will find no difficulty in fixing Louis on his throne, *si possis recte, si non quocunque modo*—whether violence or fraud be called to the aid of legitimacy, it disquiets you not. If the king stole into Paris, and the old patriots were betrayed, it was only, as the Scotch say, "*to have his ain again*," and he has your hearty wishes and thanks. But if you think more nobly of your kind, if, in concert with the wisest and best of all ages and nations, and in unison with the expanding philosophy of your own times, you trace the right of sovereigns to that which should control their authority—the will of their people—you will find it somewhat difficult to extricate the chief of the house of Bourbon from the above dilemma, of having either never been elected by a competent power, or, if so elected, of having forfeited that election by a refusal to ratify the part of that covenant on which alone depended his tenure of the crown.

You will then find it difficult to controvert

the position of the imperialists, that Louis never was lawful king of France, and that he is no more king of France at this moment, than he was previously to his return in 1814. It was never denied, that some articles of the constitution of April, especially those which secured the seats and hereditary dignities of the peers, were objectionable: but as Louis was called by that constitution, he should have left the modification of its articles to others—to the interference of future legislatures. He had no right to refuse to sign that charter and then enter his capital as king; if he did refuse, he should have returned to England. But Louis was king by the grace of God, not of Frenchmen, but of France and Navarre—that is, divine proprietor of that portion of the terraqueous globe so called, comprising such a surface and nourishing so many souls.* You may stand out for France and Navarre as an immaterial form, but the more immaterial the more should Louis have made a point of adopting any other designation more agreeable to the ears of his countrymen. As for the grace of God, I should have been inclined to allow it to his most Christian Majesty, if I had considered it merely as a form, and if coming in for its share in the king's nomination with the will of the people. But it

* See Appendix.

will be seen that both these expressions, as well as the nineteenth year of the king's reign, were deliberate and formal, determined upon by Louis and his ministers previously to his landing, as we see by Mr. Talleyrand's paper in the Moniteur of the 15th of April, and perpetually repeated, and therefore most consequent and important assertions of the king's legitimate unlawful rights. On the 14th of June, when the new constitution was presented to both houses in the presence of the king, his Majesty's Chancellor told the parliament, that "many years had passed since providence had called their monarch to the throne of his fathers;" also, "that in full possession of his hereditary rights over this great kingdom, he would not exercise the authority *which he held from God and his fathers*, except in himself prescribing bounds to his power." This was the preface to the preamble of the constitutional charter, which preamble abounded in similar positions, and premised that although *the absolute authority in France resided in the person of the king*, his Majesty would follow the example of Louis le Gros, Philip le Bel, Louis XI., Henry II., Charles IX., Louis XIV.—(what names to quote to a nation hoping to be free!) and modify the exercise of that authority. After expressing a wish to efface from the history of France all that had happened during *his absence*, the king solemnly promised to be faithful, and to swear fidelity to that constitutional charter,

which by the free *exercise of his royal authority he had granted, and did grant, made concession of, and octroi* to his subjects. Without entering into the faults of this charter, it must be seen that the king took care to reassert his rights to despotism, even in the act by which he was to make his people free. His apologists assert this preamble to have been a folly of the Chancellor D'Ambray; but it was backed by his authority, and by this title he could not be regarded as a monarch entering, with the people who had just chosen him, into a solemn covenant, prepared and discussed, and accepted by both parties to the agreement; but as another *Louis le Gros*, intent upon the enfranchisement of the commons. The senate, which should have expired by a splendid suicide, and have convoked a constituent assembly, but which scandalized the nation by its egotism and consequent baseness, did pronounce some half uttered phrases as to the presentation of this charter to the acceptation of the people; but the words died upon their lips, and the deputies, for the most part usurpers of an expired power, acquiesced almost without a murmur. Mr. Gregoire, daring to advance some recognised principles of freedom, was accused as a restorer of anarchy; Messrs. Lambrecths and Garat, who protested against precipitancy, were insulted as metaphysicians. Whilst Messrs. Laharpe and B. Constant no sooner proclaimed their

liberal notions on the basis of the constitution, than they were invited to hold their tongues, being in the predicament of strangers unacquainted with the manners and feelings of Frenchmen. It was the duty of the chambers to have reserved to themselves the examination of the charter, and to the people its acceptation; but faulty as was their complaisance, the king did not, by the preamble, concede any thing but the charter; he did not concede the power to examine, to accept, or refuse it. Had the chambers assumed this privilege, it is most probable that they would have been invited, like Messrs. B. Constant and La Harpe, to retire from the discussion.

The king, it is said, was determined to have all the merit of all the good things in this constitution; and as he and his ministers were perpetually boasting of the voluntary goodness of his majesty, they ought, at least, to have given the full benefit of it, such as it was, to the people. But from June 1814, to the following March, those who had some hopes that it might prove as good as the English Magna Charta, which, it was observed, had also been *octroyée* by King John, (a happy comparison!) acknowledged they were able to enumerate no less than ten direct violations of the terms granted by the monarch to his people. I shall give you the result of their charges in my own words, leaving out those qualifying phrases, "they say," or "it is asserted," which I beg you to supply. They object, that the first infraction was most ma-

terial, and was begun betimes; for on the 7th of June, only three days after the publication of the charter, the director-general of the police issued two ordonnances in open contradiction to the fifth and sixty-eighth articles; the first of which secured to every religion an equal liberty, and to every worship the same protection; whilst the second established the civil code, and the laws actually existing, not contrary to the charter, until legally annulled.

Now the two hundred and sixtieth article of the penal code of the year 10 expressly forbad the constrained celebration of any holidays or shutting of shops, under pain of fine and imprisonment; but Mr. Ferrand, by his ordonnance, commanded the discontinuance of all labour, and necessarily the shutting of shops on Sundays and holidays; and also commanded that all individuals of every religion, *tiendraient le devant de leur maisons dans toutes les rues ou devaient passer les processions du saint sacrement.* This was a dangerous abuse of authority in a very delicate affair. The minister was guilty of a breach of office, and came under the penalties pronounced in the one hundred and twenty-seventh article of the penal code, against all officers of the police who interfered in the exercise of the legislative power. Every one recollects the murmurs these ordonnances produced in Paris, and it is worth while to observe, that when, four months afterwards, one of them was passed into a law, the court was unable to

prevail upon the chambers to authorise the processions of the *sacrament*.

On the 10th of June, six days after the promulgation of the charter, which by its eighth article proclaimed the liberty of the press, appeared the ordonnance of the minister of the interior re-establishing the censorship. This was declared unconstitutional by a member of the chamber of peers; but the deputies, instead of protesting against this illegal measure, connived with the court in demanding a project of a law on this subject from the king, that is, from the minister, Montesquiou, who had been guilty of the infraction, and who was insolent enough, in presenting the required project, to offer as his motive "a wish to facilitate the liberty of the press." Messrs. Durbach and Raynourd in the chamber of deputies, with B. Constant, Soulety, and Souard, distinguished themselves in opposition to the censorship: all the journals, except the Gazette de France, took part against the minister, who, however, was able to pass the law, notwithstanding that it met with a violent opposition in the chamber of peers. The establishment of the censorship by an ordonnance was at first an open violation of the charter, and when carried into a law shewed the determination of the court to stand by that violation. Considering that some of us have smarted in England on account of entertaining different

notions of the nature of libel from *our peers*, and that no one can wish for a better advantage over another than did Job, when he exclaimed

"Oh that mine enemy had written a book!"

on these considerations I say, that the revision of the censorship may to some people seem almost preferable to the penalties of the chief justice. But I am talking only of the violations of the charter, of which there was a third flagrant example on the 15th of June and 15th of July, by two royal ordonnances, which fixed the mode of recruitment for the king's guard; whereas by the twelfth article of the charter the mode of recruiting both for the land and sea service was to be determined by a law; and the ordonnances were therefore unconstitutional, and subjected those who acted upon them to the pain of death, pronounced by the ninety-second article of the penal code against every one engaging in an illegal recruitment. The cannonniers of the marine were organized by another ordonnance of the 1st of July, which was also a violation of the twelfth article. On the 21st of June an ordonnance established a council of state, composed of a high commission court, a privy council, and five committees, and gave to the council a power of judging public functionaries; so that this council, which was regulated by another ordonnance of the 6th of July,

was neither more nor less than an extraordinary tribunal, and forbidden by the 63d article of the charter, which says, "There cannot be created any extraordinary commissions or tribunals."

On the 27th of June, that most important article, the 15th of the charter, declaring the legislative power to reside in king, peers, and deputies, was broken through by an ordonnance which annulled an impost law of the year 12, 22d of Ventôse, regulating certain port duties.

The 69th article of the charter declared that the soldiers in activity, the officers and soldiers in retreat, the widows, the officers and soldiers on the pension list, should preserve their ranks, honours, and pensions. Now, by an ordonnance of the 16th of December, the officers of all ranks, and military *administrators* not employed, as well as those on leave, were reduced to half-pay. Had this measure not been illegal, had it not been unjust, it would have been impolitic; and if at any time the crown should be fought for, fatal. The army exclaimed loudly against so crying an injustice; the nation at large regarded it as a gross violation of an express disposition of the charter, and a breach of the most solemn and repeated of the many promises employed in default of arms to open a way for the Bourbons into France. It was easy to see that the part of the king's conduct which required the utmost prudence was the treatment

of the army, which in France is more national, both by its constitution and by the circumstances of the times, than in any other country. The great majority of all the male population having served at some time or the other, sympathise with the fortunes and character of a corps to which they consider themselves as still in some measure attached; and by a happy complacence fixing their recollections only on the glories, without counting the disasters of their brethren in arms, look upon the soldiery as the repositories of their honour, as the representatives, as the last hope, of their country.

The conduct of the imperial troops in the campaign of 1814 was such as to excite the admiration of the allies. Never were the valour, discipline, and skill of very inferior numbers more brilliantly displayed than in the battles of Champ-Aubert, Montmirail, Vauchamp, Mormans, Montereau, Craone, Rheims, Arcy sur Aube, and St. Dizier; and, in despite of the fatal termination of the war, the citizens and peasantry, who witnessed these gallant struggles, still dwell upon the theme with pride and delight. The army of Napoleon amounted to no more than 85,000 at the utmost; computing all the regular troops, excepting those of Marshal Soult; and with these the French Emperor was so near obtaining a final success over the multitude of his opponents, that, before the allies moved for

the last time upon Paris, the order was given, and was in force for twenty-four hours, for a retreat to the Rhine. Of this fact assurance was given me, from indubitable authority at Paris, a few days after the capitulation, and my informant added, that the second in command in the Austrian army told him, when the advance was resolved upon, that he expected to be marched prisoner into the French capital. The head-quarters of the Emperor of Austria were by chance separated from those of the grand army, so that the inclination of the Prince Schwartzenberg to retreat could not be backed by a precise order from his master; and when that general insisted upon waiting for instructions from his court, the Emperor Alexander, affirming the distance would cause too great a delay, took the responsibility of the advance upon himself, and the movement was commenced in precise opposition to the wishes of the commander in chief and the whole Austrian army. The allies found themselves at Paris they knew not how. A general opinion prevails, that the assertions of Napoleon relative to the conduct of the Duke of Ragusa are founded in truth, and at any rate the army is saved, in the eyes of their countrymen, between the supposition of treachery on the part of the generals, and of a justifiable resolution to terminate the contest by the sacrifice of the dynasty for which it had al-

ready made such splendid efforts. In short, the French considered the honour of their armies untarnished by the issue of the campaign of 1814; and they were therefore inclined to contemplate the reduction of their pay and force as a treason of the restored family, in unison with their whole system and with their declared wish to efface from the memory of their contemporaries, and the page of history, all the twenty-five years of misfortunes, or, in other words, the triumphs of republican and imperial France.

At the same time there were many patriotic and thinking persons who would have found some excuse for this step in the poverty of the royal treasury, and in the difficulty of supporting an army calculated for forty-four millions of subjects in a kingdom reduced to a population of twenty-eight millions; had there not been repeated proofs of profusion in other instances, and had not the restored family betrayed, in many ways, a settled disregard of this great national body. Every saloon in Paris abounds with stories of the insults and the vulgar pleasantries of the Duke of Berri, addressed to many officers of distinguished merit. Does he inquire of one, in what campaign he served? and, is told 'in all;'—In what capacity? 'aid-de-camp to the Emperor;'—he turns upon his heel with a contemptuous smile, and the officer is noticed no more. Does he learn from another that he

has served twenty-five years? *Vingt-cinqt ans de brigandage*, is his reply. Do the old guard displease that great commander the Duke of Angoulême in performing some manœuvre? they are told that they must go to England, and learn their exercise. Lastly, is a colonel to be degraded? the Duke of Berri tears off his epaulets with his own hand—another time he strikes a soldier on the parade. The Swiss regiments return to the Tuileries; but, in addition to this foreign guard, six thousand nobles, the very old and the very young, tricked out in fancy dresses, which draw down the fatal curse of ridicule, compose a household force, the laughter of the citizens, and the envy of the army. The old imperial guard, outrageously banished from the capital, and suddenly recalled at the beginning of the ministry of Marshal Soult, are scarcely on their route towards Paris, when fresh jealousies create fresh orders, and the indignant veterans are marched back to their quarters. Certain Chouan chiefs are sent into Brittany, and there distribute decorations and recompenses to those rebels whom five armies had routed and quelled. Another Chouan lays a plan for enrolling a sort of sacred battalion against the plots of the army, and, though apparently prosecuted for this treason, is never punished. Lastly, the invaders of France, destroyed by the army at Quiberon, are to have a monument raised on the spot,

as a perpetual commemoration of their loyalty, and the treason of the troops by whom they fell. The apologists and defenders of the king lament and admit the imprudences I have just detailed. Connected with this debasement of the army was the suppression of the establishments for the female orphans of the legion of honour, which the king was, however, obliged to restore, and the reduction of the pay of the invalids ; add to this also the evident attempt to degrade the decoration of the legion, by the profusion with which the crosses were granted to the lowest agents of government, even to the clerks of the post-office, and the care with which the higher ministers laid them aside. The deductions drawn from this conduct were most unfavourable to the royal cause, and left no doubt in the mind of the military, nor of the nation, that the honourable existence of the French army was considered as incompatible with the system of the new court. In fact, when the Duke de Feltre went to England, he assured the Regent's ministers, that the standing army, which had been fixed at 240,000, did not amount to more than 84,000—he did not add what is said here, but for which I will not vouch, that M. de Talleyrand and another of the Bourbon ministers had pocketed the difference of pay required for the nominal and actual amount of the troops. No wonder then, that in addition to the complaints of the

army against their actual distresses, their imaginary injuries contributed to increase their disgust, and that of the nation, towards the House of Bourbon; and that every talent, whether of the pen or pencil, was called into play to overwhelm with ridicule and contempt the warriors of the court. I must not forget to mention, that the reduction of the army was scarcely so unpopular as the attempt to new model it, by renewing the regiments, and chiefly by the appointment of nearly five thousand officers, either old emigrants or young nobles, totally devoid of all military character or merit. The abolition of the national colours, and the adoption of the flag of La Vendée, though it afflicted the nation, was more particularly affecting to the army, who saw in this step the same determination to tear from them all memorial of their former existence. The imperial guard burnt their eagles, and drank their ashes; some regiments concealed, and all regretted, their cockades. The friends of the court affected to consider the mere change of a flag as a trifle, and, in spite of all experience, did not recollect that nothing is a trifle to which any importance, however imaginary, is attached by a whole nation. They shewed that the king was determined to illegitimatise all proceedings, as he had said in his letter to the sovereigns, as far back as the assembly of the states-general, ay

even his own, or that he forgot that he had worn the tricoloured cockade himself from the 11th of July, 1789, to the 21st of June, 1792. The provisional government, which acted in general with great prudence, made this sacrifice to the Count of Artois, the day before they surrendered their power into his hands, and must in this their last decree be considered as acting in conformity with the express wishes of the Bourbon princes, two of whom were then advancing to Paris, having unfurled the white flag.

Besides the violations of the charter already mentioned, may be fairly reckoned three other edicts; the first of which, of the 30th of July, for the re-establishment of the royal military school, avowed its purpose to be, to give to the nobles of the kingdom the enjoyment of those advantages which had been granted them by an edict of 1751. One hundred years of previous nobility were necessary to procure admission for any pupil of this ancient school; and this drew a line at once between the old and new noblesse, in opposition to the third article of the charter, which made all employs, civil and military, equally open to all Frenchmen. Again, the fifty-ninth article maintained the existing tribunals and courts, and ordained that nothing should be changed in respect to them, except by a law. A law was proposed to the chamber of deputies, for the organisation of the court of

cassation; some amendments were proposed, but not adopted, and before the bill passed the chamber was adjourned: nevertheless, the king himself, without his parliament, re-organises this court, and expels many of its members, without pretext or declared motive. The public decided, justly, that this was not only an infraction of the charter and an insult to the chamber; but, moreover, that the evident motive of this measure was another breach of the charter, which in its eleventh article forbade all enquiry into any votes or opinions entertained previously to the restoration. The same breach was more strikingly hazarded in the expulsion of the fifteen members of the Institute—Guyton Morveau, Carnot, Monge, Napoléon Bonaparte, Cambacères, Merlin, Rœderer, Garat, Sieyes, Maury, Lucien Bonaparte, Lakanal, Gregoire, Joseph Bonaparte, and David.

The forty-eighth article of the charter forbade the establishment of any impost without the consent of the chambers and the sanction of the king; but the Chancellor Dambray, whom I find styled the great partizan of ancient barbarism, by his own authority established duties upon the provisions of the judges, upon letters of naturalization, and upon journals, in direct usurpation of a power solely legislative.

So much for the decided violations of the charter, which I should not have detailed had

not a general opinion gone abroad in England that the complaints of the French against their good king were frivolous and unfounded, arising rather from their turbulence and a spirit of discontent, which gave importance to trifles, than from any just grounds of dissatisfaction, and of suspicion that the new government was determined to return to the ancient order of things. That such was the determination of the king, or of those in whose hands he was an instrument (it is indifferent which), other facts, not so palpable, perhaps, but conjointly of great weight, will leave little room to doubt. For these I must refer you to my next.

LETTER VI.

Paris, April —.

Lest there should be either in the preceding or the following letter any appearance of a partiality directed against the chief of the family of the Bourbons, I must premise, as before, that I am only a transcriber of opinions prevalent with a certain portion of France, or of statements become now a mere matter of record, relative to that illustrious house; and that, even as to the terms and epithets which may bear hard upon them, "*non ego, sed Democritus dixit,*" although, to avoid repetition, I do not qualify every sentence with the conditional phrase usual on such occasions. So far from suspecting me of any previous antipathy to this king, or kings in general, you will allow that the most efficient means of preserving thrones, is to show how they have been shaken, and that, if Louis should recover his crown, his best friend will be the man who shall then point out to him how he lost it before. With this proviso, I continue my narrative of feelings and of facts. The royalists, the pure, the returned royalists, always laughed when they pronounced the word charter, and scoffed at the revolutionary term "*liberal ideas,*" which, in Spain, such is the benefit of restoration, has become a title of proscription. M. Dambray, the chancellor, took every opportunity

of professing doctrines only suited to an absolute monarchy. M. Ferrand, director-general of the posts, Laisné, president of the chamber of deputies, the Abbé Montesquiou, and others, the known sycophants or pensioners of the court, besides the whole body of nobles, as well emigrant as those who had acquiesced in Napoleon's tyranny, and the clergy at large, adopted the same language.

You may recollect that the members of the ancient parliament, assembled at the house of M. Lepelletier de Morfontaine, protested formally against the constitutional charter on the 4th of June; and that the nobility, headed by the princes of the blood, prepared the same protest, which was only not signed and delivered, in support of their former rights. A decided conduct on the part of Louis would have shewn that he partook of no such superannuated notions; but, acting as he did, whatever were his real wishes and final intentions, he ran the risk of being involved in the general hatred and suspicion excited against the ministers, the nobles, and the clergy, throughout the capital and the greater part of France. It is extraordinary that he should have thought it possible to force a whole people to retrograde by means of a handful of partisans without skill or courage, already known and suspected of anti-national designs, for Louis was well aware of the progress of liberal opinions in France, since the first appeal which he made to his people upon the landing of Napoleon told them to rally round the char-

ter. It is truly edifying to observe, that in the change which that event produced in the language of his majesty and the royalists, may be recognized all that they ought to have done, and all they did not do. Laisné, the president of the representatives of the people, and the organ of the famous maxim, "*If the king wills it, the law wills it,*" then told the chamber of deputies that the king was preparing wise laws on the imposts, on the finances, for the irrevocable dotation of the legion of honour, for the responsibility of ministers, and for the definitive establishment of the liberty of the press—all this was *just* about to be done, when the *genius of evil* arose to overturn all their hopes, and to break that constitutional charter, the *sacred palladium of the safety of the state.* The majority of the chamber of deputies, which had before registered all the ministers' wishes almost without a murmur, now declared that every placard against the acquirers of national domains, or in favour of feudalism, tithes, or other seignorial rights, should be considered as a conspiracy, and subject the authors to reclusion. It is consoling for all lovers of liberty to see that despots and their slaves must, in the day of danger, have recourse to their people, and must apply themselves to the common propensity of mankind in favour of individual independence. This Mr. Laisné had been one of those who lent themselves most directly to that portion of the cabinet which had determined upon the partial restoration, at least, of the national lands, and

which, by so doing, may be considered as the principal cause of the late revolution.

The disquiet most prevalent, and most likely to prevail at the return of the Bourbons, arose from a suspicion that the national property of both kinds, that is, the property formerly belonging to the church, and distinguished under the name of *biens nationaux de première origine*, and that arising from the possessions of emigrants, called simply *biens nationaux*, might, by some stratagem, be restored to the ancient possessors or their representatives. The principal portion of these properties being sold, partly even in the time of Louis XVI., a number, amounting, it is said, to six millions and a half of people, had become interested in the perpetual settlement of these possessions in the hands of the present owners; and the nation itself was concerned in the disposal of the unsold portion of these properties, as they had been allotted by the imperial government for the maintenance of the hospitals and of the legion of honour. It was natural, therefore, that Louis should spare no promises to set the minds of his subjects at ease on this important point; and it seemed to the French no less according to rule, that having made these promises, and confirmed them by the 9th article of the charter, he should, when his object was obtained, contrive to break them. I must, indeed, even on my own part, say, that what has given rise to the expression, "*the faith of a king*," I am unable to divine, history containing little else but events

caused by their want of faith. His first object was to obtain his throne, his second to strengthen it. Unfortunately he thought of no better method than to remunerate the faction of his followers at the expense of the nation, or at least of another faction a thousand times more powerful. So early as the 4th of June, an ordonnance of the king expressed a *wish* to restore the *unsold* properties to the ancient proprietors; and as this could not be done without a positive law, and a pretext of exchange, although several establishments of the legion of honour had already been deprived of their funds, M. Ferrand, the minister, proposed this law; and, in his speech, made use of the fatal expression—"the "*sacred inviolable rights* which those who have "followed the *right line* must have on the proper-"ties, of which, by the revolutionary storms, they "had been despoiled." The project was referred to a committee, of which M. Bedoch being the reporter, by the noble firmness of his opposition to the law, and the amendment by which he proposed that it should be declared, that "at no *time, under any pretext,* should there be granted any indemnity to the ancient proprietors," only drew down the still more fatal sentence of the president Laisné, who said he would not consent to the amendment, "because *he would not shut the door against hope.*" Not a word was lost throughout France. This was no party ques-

tion: men who will live quietly under the Emperor of Morocco will be driven into madness by a hint of losing their own. True it is, that the king affects in his late proclamation to treat this rumour of his wishing to restore the national properties as a base calumny: he has the insolence, I use the word, to say he will not deign to reply to such a ridiculous charge. "*A king must not lower himself,*" he tells his people, "*to refute groundless accusations;*" if so, he must be content not to reign: if he chooses to be independent, he must retire: would he drop the censure, he should get rid of his subjects; but if he will consent neither to abdicate nor to argue, his people must continue unanswered and in arms against him. But the king, or M. de Chateaubriand, who drew up the proclamation, knew very well that no reply is to be made to the charge. You want no more proof than what has been brought to shew that the French had grounds for their alarm; and it may be added, that it was indifferent to them whether the king himself, or the system of his administration, gave rise to their just suspicions. However, it may be worth while to strengthen your conviction, by mentioning an extraordinary fact, which will evince the pains that were taken, and the engines that were set at work to bring about the change so much desired by the restored court. When the fear of the

king and his friends extorted, during the march of Napoleon, some attempts at justice, a committee was appointed in the chamber of deputies to examine into the petitions lying unpresented in the parliament offices. Amongst them were discovered nearly three hundred, which had been kept back by the Abbé Montesquiou, from individuals complaining that they had been refused absolution by their priests on account of being possessors of national properties. The restitution of these properties was thus made the *sine qua non* of salvation; and, indeed, at Savenay in the Lower Loire, a sermon was preached on the 5th of March, in which the audience were told, that those who did not return "*their own*" to the nobles and to the *curés*, as the *representatives of the monks*, should have the lot of Jezebel, and *should be devoured by dogs*. It is not at all wonderful that the nobles and clergy should endeavour to recover what was formerly attached to those two privileged classes: but it is wonderful that any one should expect that the restitution could be made without the utmost resistance from the present owners, or should be indignant that the resistance was made. Every one at Paris at the time knew that the nobles talked openly of the restitution, and joining with the monied men, who are always, in some degree, in the hands of the government, so depreciated the securities and value of these

properties, that no one would advance any sum upon them. Let us wait a little, said these gentlemen, and we shall get our properties back again for as little as was originally given for them, if they are not restored by force. But the national goods had been most of them often sold and resold, and the last purchasers, having no concern with the low price of the original confiscations, felt the full injustice and hardship of the projected restitution. Nor was the mere change of hands the whole of the evil to be dreaded by the property passing into the purses of the old owners; every abuse of the ancient system was naturally supposed the consequence of the return of the nobles and the clergy. Seignorial rights, feudalism, tithes, benefices, were in every mouth, and with some reason; for several of the returned nobles were indiscreet enough to claim certain of these seignorial rights, that of exclusive chase, for instance, over their former properties, even when not restored. Although Voltaire proved the mistake of Montesquiou in saying that feudalism is an event which has once happened in the world, and which, perhaps, will never again happen; yet the French of the present day think that establishment as strange and singular a monster as it was looked upon by the witty president. They were wrong, however, *in* supposing that the king could think it his interest

to re-establish feudalism; for his ancestors had for ages struggled against the seignorial and church privileges, and Louis XVI. himself had wished to get rid of them by that establishment of the territorial impost which was resisted by the parliament, who were unaccountably favoured by the people. The states-general abolished feudal rights, established the equality of impost, and were applauded by the people, who, from that time, thinking the interests of the king and the nobles united against themselves, supposed that their sovereign must be a friend of feudalism, forgetting how he had formerly attempted to destroy one of its dearest privileges.

The people, however, are in a certain degree right, for it is not easy to doubt, that if Louis, by re-establishing the seignorial rights, could place the monarchy on its ancient footing, he would not hesitate an instant to make the sacrifice to those nobles, who, in more tranquil times, he might attempt to crush in their turn. It was, however, enough for the people to feel, that the nobles who were the consequences of the return of the Bourbons, and were identified with their system, were striving to recover their obsolete rights; which, because the lower classes seldom, at least as we heard, in our country, broke out in acts of savage cruelty, we are apt in England to think have been represented

in colours too odious by the partizans of the revolution. The peasant of the

"Gay happy land of innocence and ease"

was the peasant of poetry, or the revolution would never have taken place. To any one moderately conversant with facts instead of fiction, nothing can appear so little desirable as the restoration of what the clergy of Paris, in their address to the king on the 15th of last August, call—"*that old France, in which were intermingled, without distinction, in every heart, those two sacred names —God and the King.*"

It is sufficient only to call to mind the diversity of seignorial and clerical rights, of judicial institutions, of invidious exemptions, and partial burthens*, which obtained in the different provinces, and the recollection and horror of which rendered tolerable a system of well organized tyranny proceeding from the head of the state alone, and weighing equally upon all, and reconciled or rather endeared to every Frenchman the code of Napoleon, where he saw himself and all his countrymen for ever secured against the barbarous usages of Franche Comté or Provence, and the prescriptive privileges of a lawyer of Normandy or a noble of Poitou. If we are to have recourse to poetry, let us look not to the sportive vassals of the Loire, but to the

* Amounting, it is said, to 144 customs, all having the force of a law, and all different.

being which Goldsmith's Traveller saw at home, and be happy that the self-veneration which he beheld only in England has now spread amongst others of his hundred realms, and augmented that portion of the human race which alone can be dignified with the name of man. We are guilty of treason against mankind, against God himself, if we take up arms in favour of barbarism, and attempt violently to arrest the progress or circumscribe the diffusion of human happiness. It is a base and wilful mistake to assert, that because Frenchmen had submitted to Napoleon, they were a nation of slaves, unacquainted with the principles, and therefore incapable, of liberty. Many causes contributed to their patience of his despotic sway: perpetual war and victory furnished an excuse for extending the autocracy of a general (for which the necessity is acknowledged in the freest nations) to the monarch of a people entirely military; but submission to an individual conqueror, if voluntary, could never reconcile them to the reign of thirty thousand nobles, and if compulsory, as we in England generally have asserted it to be, must increase rather than diminish their odium of another despotism. If we do not allow that the French understand liberty, we must say that they fully comprehend the advantages and nature of equality, which is irreconcileable with the old system. One monarch and a whole nation of equals is that system which Frenchmen will

easily bear; but the superior privileges of a fellow subject are incompatible with his notions of liberty: however we English may conceive our neighbours to misunderstand the true nature and characteristics of this blessing, we cannot be justified in doing our utmost to render their attainment of it impossible, by concurring with the conspired sovereigns to restore the kings, the nobles, and the clergy of that ancient, oppressed, vassalled, decimated France. Supposing that by fourteen years of subjection to Napoleon this country has disgraced herself, are we to visit her with the dreadful penalty of perpetual bondage, and that of the nature the most painful and revolting—the bondage of a brother? There is scarcely a privilege against which we have successfully struggled in England that we are not endeavouring to re-establish in France, by the restoration of the Bourbons; and after two hundred years of recorded contempt of this country for her servility and superstition, we reverse the complaint, and hate her because she again shows the wish, and makes the second effort to shake off the tyranny of vassalage and superstition. Our pretext, the choice of the manner in which she would complete her purpose, I will touch upon perhaps another time; at present my object has been to show the connection between the return of Louis and the old regime, and the consequent unpopularity of a restored king regarded, even in

the most favourable light, as a weak well meaning man, the half reluctant instrument of the nobles and the priests. The latter played their usual part, God forgive them! from M. de Talleyrand, archbishop of Rheims, grand almoner, corresponding with the bishop of Orthosia at Rome, to procure a bull for the re-establishment of the Gallican church, down to the wretched curé of St. Roch, refusing sepulture to his ancient hostess, Mademoiselle Raucour. With the return of the Saturnian sceptre of the Bourbons, religion was also to revisit France, so long deprived of the consolation of continuing the Levitical law. The professors of arts and arms, the scientific sons of the impious Institute, having eaten, and drunk, and played their fill, yielded up the stage to the linsey woolsey brothers of a more decently wanton court, and reinvigorated retainers. Sixty covers spread daily at the Tuileries kept alive the gratitude and the zeal of as many champions of God and the king, whose brethren of the departments inhaled, at a distance, the steams of the royal refectory. The court carpenter preferred his useless block from a scarecrow to a saint; the wax-chandlers contemplated the inevitable re-illumination of all the extinguished candlesticks of every shrine; days and nights all the gates of all the churches were expanded, whilst their rival shops were shut. Relics rattled together from the four

quarters of the capital to be re-adjusted and re-enshrined by a second St. Louis. But the king might have given their daily bread to his sixty priests, he might have said his thousand masses, he might have devoted his France to the Virgin, or grubbed up his brother's bones; his Antigone might have shut the Sunday shops, or even have gone the greater length of forbidding the masquerade of the *mi-carême* (dangerous as refusing both bread and shows at once must be to modern Rome), she might cherish the town of Nismes, and its vow of a silver baby for God Almighty, as the lure and promised reward of her conception of a man-child. These offences might have been forgotten or been condemned to ridicule, with the gaiters of his majesty, and the English bonnet of Madame; but when the people, in the pious propensities of the new court, foresaw the reinvestiture of the clergy, when they saw the barns rebuilding which were to receive a portion of their own bread, and the very *fluctus decumanus* of ancient despotism, the fatal tenth wave about to burst upon their heads, the religion of the royal family being likely to prove so chargeable could then no longer be a matter of indifference, or be visited only with contempt. In Paris the decent piety of the king excited only a smile, whilst the sombre superstition of the duchess inspired a more serious disgust; but in several of the departments,

the triumphant clergy being more than suspected of a conspiracy against the manners, feelings, and properties of the people, had, in conjunction with their coadjutors, the nobles, excited a hatred which was in daily danger of breaking out into acts of violence. It is undoubted that the mass of nobles, in many provinces, are indebted for their lives to the return of Napoleon, who, by removing the fears of the lower classes, has also laid asleep their revenge. Lord Chesterfield might fairly say, that a man is neither the better nor the worse for wearing a black coat; but when that colour denotes a class of persons at variance with, and direct opposition to, all the interests and habits of the community, we must not be surprised that it should be at first unpopular, and at last proscribed.

It was the opinion of Leslie and Collier, "*that no man should say 'my parson' or 'my chaplain' in any other sense than we say 'my king' or 'my God,'*" and they were backed by the whole clergy in convocation. I doubt whether king, peers, and commons, in England, could persuade our nobility and gentry of the reasonable-

ness of this notion in these days, and certainly it is not amongst the liberal, unambitious, and enlightened individuals who now compose our ecclesiastical establishment that such a dogma would receive support.

The French of this day look upon the pretensions of the clergy as no less obsolete and ridiculous than we should the decisions of Collier and the convocation; and these pretensions having every apparent protection of the court, could not but increase their apprehensions of the new system. The question came home to every man, whether or not the most vexatious and inevitably noxious of the three great privileged orders who divided the oppression of the people with the nobles and the crown, should resume all its rights over the body, soul, and goods, of their fellow-citizens. The protestants were more seriously alarmed at hearing the toleration of Napoleon classed with his many impious institutions, which were gradually to be abolished by the repairing hand of legitimate power. Indeed these dissenters were with little caution designated as the chief partizans of the revolution, and as being by their turn of mind the natural

enemies of government in state as well as church; just as Daniel Burgess and his audience were hooted by Sacheverel's mob as the murderers of Charles the First.

The persecutions consequent upon the restoration of another branch of the house of Bourbon might render the example of his catholic majesty not a little alluring to his brother of France; and a royalist mob, as well in Provence as Castile, might be induced to extol the inquisition, or cry out, *the cat and nine tails for ever*, though the first stroke might be laid upon their own backs. A reported saying of Louis, that his cousin Ferdinand knew how to reign, but was a little too precipitate, did not assure the minds of those who expected the days of dragooning to return. I have myself heard it regretted by two very respectable nobles that Louis had not acted like Ferdinand. The protestants had already provided themselves with arms, and some scandalous scenes, little to the honour of their respective pastors, and those of the catholic faith, were about to ensue, when the return of toleration prevented the impending catastrophe. Napoleon saved the priests as he saved the nobles. Will you then any longer be inclined to think that the success of the Emperor must be attributed solely to a previous conspiracy, seconded by the treason and violence of the military bodies? or indeed attri-

bute it to any other general cause than the persuasion of the vast majority of the thinking and active part of the nation, that the *Bourbons were not suitable to France.* I repeat, again and again, there was no conspiracy; and I add, as before, that Napoleon was the decided preference of the people at the period of the first of March, when they had to choose between the reigning and the abdicated monarch. I do not say that he was the man, who, under every circumstance, would have been their choice. It is impossible that the question should have been brought to a fairer trial between the two parties. If you would hear a few circumstances not generally known relative to the re-occupation of the throne by Napoleon, you must turn to my next.

LETTER VII.

Paris, April.

THE Emperor Alexander was amusing himself at Vienna at a dressing match with Madame ——, in which the autocrat of all the Russias, although he employed only a minute and fifty seconds at this toilet, was beaten by his fair rival by twenty-five seconds; the King of France was grubbing for the bones of the Dauphin; and the Duchess of Angoulême, having made her uncle promise solemnly at parting that he would abolish the fête of the *mi-carême*, was upon a progress with her duke into the south, when Napoleon embarked at Elba with eleven hundred and forty-two men, and in twenty days recovered the imperial crown of France. Some circumstances relative to the expedition were related in my presence, the other evening, to General Kosciusko, by Baron the Colonel Termanouski, commandant of the Polish lancers of the guard who accompanied the Emperor to Elba, and as they tally with the accounts circulated here, both in print and conversation, as well as with the famous bulletin of the Moni-

teur, I shall venture to give you a short detail of his information. The colonel commanded at Porto Longone, and had, besides his lancers, about three hundred soldiers in his garrison. Six days before the embarkation the Emperor had sent for him, and enquiring what number of vessels were in his harbour, desired him to hire and provision them on his return, and to prevent all boats from leaving the port. He followed his instructions, and was speedily visited by an Englishman who was detained by this measure, and who represented to him, in the most violent terms, that his detention was unjust, and might cause a war between Elba and Great Britain. The colonel smiled, represented the inequality of the powers, but still obeyed his instructions. The day before the embarkation he received orders to disburse three or four thousand francs, for making a road, and had almost forgotten the embargo, when, on the 26th of February, whilst he was working in his little garden, an aide-de-camp from the Emperor directed him to embark all his men by six o'clock in the evening, and repair to the flotilla off Porto Ferrajo, at a given time the same night. It was so late, that he could not put his soldiers on board before half past seven, at which time he got into a boat, and rowing to the station, arrived at the imperial brig the Inconstant, which was under

sail. On mounting the deck, the Emperor accosted him with "*comment ce va-t-il? où est votre monde?*" and, on receiving the answer, said no more. The colonel learned that the little garrison of Porto Ferrajo had not received orders to embark until one o'clock the same day, that they had got on board at four, and that the Emperor, with Bertrand, Drouet, and his staff, arrived at eight, when a single gun gave the signal, and they set sail. The flotilla consisted of the Inconstant of twenty-six guns, L'Etoile, and La Caroline, bombardes, and four feluccas. The soldiers on board the Inconstant were four hundred of the old guard. The colonel knew not, and no one appeared to know, whither they were going, but the guard, when drawn out on the beach, had shouted "*Paris ou la mort,*" as if by a presentiment of their destination. The wind blew from the south, and at first rather strong, but subsided into a calm, so that by daylight they had made no more than six leagues, and were between Elba and Capraia, in sight of the English and French cruisers. The night, however, had not been totally lost, for during the darkness the soldiers and crew had been let over the sides of the brig, and had entirely changed her painting from yellow and grey to black and white, in order to escape the observation of those who were acquainted with the vessel.

It was proposed to return to Porto Ferrajo, but Napoleon ordered the flotilla to continue its route, determining, in case of necessity, to attack the French cruisers, two frigates and a brig, which however it was thought would join rather than oppose them. At twelve the same day the wind freshened, and the flotilla, at four o'clock, was off the headland of Leghorn. Three men of war were in sight, and one of them, a brig, bearing down on the Inconstant, the ports were taken up, and some preparations made for action. The guard, however, were ordered to take off their caps and lie down on the deck, Napoleon intending to board the vessel only as a last resource, and in case the Inconstant should not be permitted to pass without a visit. But the Zephyr, so she was called, only passed alongside the brig, and her captain, Andrieux, being hailed by Lieutenant Taillade, who was known to him, only asked whither the Inconstant was bound—Taillade answered "to Genoa," and wished to know if he could execute any commission for the captain of the Zephyr—Andrieux said no, and at parting cried out "*how's the Emperor?*" Napoleon himself exclaimed—"*wonderfully well,*" and the ships dropped away from each other. The wind increased during the night of the 27th, and at day-light of the 28th the coasts of Provence were in sight. A seventy-four gun ship was seen steering appa-

rently for Sardinia. The colonel said, that before this time it was generally thought on board that the flotilla was going to Naples. Many questions were put to the officers by the men, and by the officers even to the Emperor, who smiled, and said nothing: at last, however, he exclaimed—"*éh bien! c'est la France.*" Immediately every body was in activity, and crowded round the Emperor, to hear his intentions. The first step he took was to order two or three of the commissaries of his little army to prepare their pens and paper, which they accordingly got in order, and, resting on the companion, took down, from the Emperor's mouth, the proclamations to the army and to the French *. When these compositions were written they were read aloud; Napoleon disliked some portions of them, and made alterations; they were again read, and again altered, until after at least ten revisions, he said, "*that will do, now copy them.*" At the word, all the soldiers and sailors who could write laid themselves down on the deck, with their paper and implements, and completed a sufficient number for immediate dispersion on landing. The next object was the preparation of the tricoloured cockades, which was easily managed, by ripping off one of the

* See Appendix, B.

circles of the Elbese cockade, which had, at their first arrival on the island, been even more like the French national colours, but had been changed by the Emperor, who thought it might be the cause of suspicion. During these occupations and for the latter part of the voyage, the officers, soldiers, and sailors surrounded Napoleon, who took very little sleep, and was generally on deck. Lying down, sitting, standing, and strolling about him, familiarly, they asked him unceasing questions, to which he as unreservedly and without one sign of anger or impatience replied, although some were not a little indiscreet, for they required his opinions on many living characters, kings, marshals, and ministers, and discussed notorious passages of his own campaigns, and even of his domestic policy. After satisfying or eluding their curiosity, he would himself enter into details of his own conduct, of that of his rivals, or of his friends; and then, from the examination of contemporary merit, touched upon such historical topics as related more particularly to the military events of modern up to ancient times. All this he did with an easy persuasive eloquence which delighted and instructed his hearers, and, as our colonel added, rendered every word worthy a perpetual record. He talked without disguise of

his present attempt, of its difficulties, of his means, and of his hopes. He said, "In a "case like this, one must think slowly, but act "promptly. I have long weighed and most ma- "turely considered the project. The glory, the "advantages we shall gain, if we succeed, I need "not enlarge upon. If we fail—to military men, "who have from their infancy faced death in so "many shapes, the fate which awaits us is not "terrific: we know, and we despise, for we have "a thousand times faced the worst which a re- "verse can bring."

These were nearly the last words which he spoke before his little fleet came to an anchor in the gulf of Juan, and they were delivered with a more set phrase, as a sort of final address to the companions of his great enterprise. Antibes had been in sight since mid-day on the 28th, and on the 1st of March, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the flotilla anchored in the bay. A captain and five and twenty men were dispatched to make themselves masters of any battery which might command the landing-place, and the officer finding none, marched without orders to Antibes, which he entered, but was made prisoner by the officer commanding the garrison. The troops were disembarked by five in the evening, on the beach at Cannes; the Emperor was the last to leave the brig.

Napoleon took some refreshment and repose in a bivouac, which was prepared for him in a meadow surrounded by olive trees, near the shore, where there is now a small column raised to commemorate the event, and where they shew the table on which he was served. The Emperor previously calling Termanouski, asked him if he knew what cavalry horses had been embarked at Elba? the colonel told him, he knew nothing of the matter, and that he himself had not brought one. "Well," replied Napoleon, "I have brought four horses; let us "divide them. I fear I must have one: as you "command my cavalry, you must have another. "Bertrand, Drouot, and Cambrone must settle "about the other two as well as they can." The horses had been landed some way farther down, so that the bivouac being broken up, Napoleon and his staff proceeded to the spot on foot. The Emperor walked alone, interrogating some peasants whom he met. Termanouski and the generals followed, carrying their own saddles. When they found the horses, Bertrand, the grand marshal, refused to take one; he said he would walk. Drouot followed his example. Cambrone and Molat were the other two mounted officers. The Emperor then gave Colonel Termanouski a handful of Napoleons, and ordered him to procure some horses for

immediate use. The colonel bought fifteen, giving any thing the peasants asked. These were harnessed to three pieces of cannon which were brought from Elba, and to a coach, given to her brother by the Princess Pauline. News came of the failure at Antibes. "We have made "a bad beginning," said the Emperor; "but we "have nothing to do but to march as fast as we "can, and get to the passes before the news of "our arrival." The moon rose, and Napoleon, with his invading army, moved forwards at eleven o'clock. They marched all night: the peasants of the villages through which they passed said nothing—they stared, shrugged up their shoulders, and shook their heads, when they were told the Emperor was returned. At Grasse, a town of 6000 inhabitants, where there was a report that pirates had landed, every thing was in a state of alarm. Shops and windows were shut, and the crowds in the street, notwithstanding the national cockade, and the shouts of *Vive l'Empereur*, suffered the troops to march without a word or sign either of disapprobation or approval. They halted for an hour on a hill above the town, and the soldiers began to look at each other with an air of doubt and dissatisfaction; when on a sudden a body of the townspeople were seen coming towards them with provisions, and crying, *Vive l'Empe-*

reur! From this moment the people of the country seemed satisfied that the Emperor had landed, and his march was rather a triumph than an invasion. The cannons and the carriage were left at Grasse; and, as the roads were steep and bad in the course of this first march, which was twenty leagues, (for they reached the village of Cérénon in the evening of the 2d,) the Emperor frequently walked on foot with his grenadiers, whom, when they complained of their hardships, he called his GRUMBLERS, and who laughed at him when he stumbled and fell. The familiar appellations by which he was known to his soldiers at this time were *Notre petit tondu*, and *Jean de l'epée;* and he frequently heard these names repeated in a half whisper, as he was scrambling up the ascents amidst his veterans. He slept at Barême on the third, and dined at Digne on the fourth: it was either here or at Castellan, as the colonel said, that Napoleon endeavoured to persuade the landlord of the inn at which he stopped to cry *Vive l'Empereur!* and when the man positively refused, and exclaimed, on the contrary, *Vive le Roi!* so far from being angry, praised his loyalty, and only asked him to drink his health, to which mine host acceded.

At Digne the proclamations to the army and to the French people were printed, and circu-

lated with such rapidity throughout Dauphiny, that, on his route, Napoleon found the towns and villages ready to receive him. As yet, however, only one soldier had joined him, a grenadier, whom Colonel Termanouski met on the road; and, informing him of the attempt in which he was engaged, endeavoured to persuade into the service. The soldier being told that the Emperor was advancing, laughed heartily, and said, "Good! I shall have something to tell at home to-night." He was with some difficulty convinced that the colonel was not in jest; but when he believed him, consented readily to enlist. "Where shall you sleep to-night?" said he to the officer; and on being told, rejoined, "My mother lives three leagues hence; I must take leave of her; but will be with you to-night." Termanouski was accosted some time after arriving in his quarters that evening, by his recruit, who tapped him on the shoulder, and would not be satisfied until promised that the Emperor should be instantly informed that Melon the grenadier had kept his word, and had joined fortunes with his ancient master. Napoleon slept at Gap on the fifth, attended only by ten cavalry soldiers and forty grenadiers. The fortresses and bridge of Sisteron were the same day occupied by General Cambrone, at the head of forty grenadiers. But Melon

was the only recruit; so that the inhabitants of the towns and villages, particularly at St. Bonnet, wished to sound the tocsin, and rise in mass to accompany the little army; and notwithstanding they were refused, almost blocked up the roads, and impeded the march by pressing round the Emperor, who sometimes walked on foot. On the 6th, Napoleon slept at Gap, and General Cambrone, with his forty, at Mure, towards which place the advanced guard of the garrison of Grenoble of 6000 men had marched to stop their further progress, and refused to parley with the general. Colonel Termanouski being on the advance, saw a body of troops with a white flag drawn up in a defile near Vizille. He attempted to parley, but an officer advancing towards him, cried out, "Retire, I can have no communication with you: keep your distance; my men will fire." The colonel tried to pacify him, telling him, it was with the Emperor Napoleon that he would have to speak, not with himself. But the officer still threatened, and gave the same answer to Raoul, an aide-de-camp of the staff, so that the colonel returned to the Emperor, and reported his failure. Napoleon said to Termanouski, smiling, "If that is the case, I must try what I can do myself." He dismounted; and ordering about fifty of his grenadiers to

advance, with arms reversed, walked quietly towards the defile, where he found a battalion of the 5th of the line, a company of sappers, and another of miners, amounting in all to seven or eight hundred men, drawn up to oppose him. The officer commanding continued to vociferate, sometimes against the Emperor, calling out, *it is an impostor, it is not he;* and sometimes against his troops, ordering them to fire. The troops were silent and motionless; for an instant it appeared they were about to raise their muskets, when Napoleon, halting his grenadiers, walked calmly up to the battalion, and, when close to the line, stopped short in the front, looked steadfastly at them, and throwing open his outer coat, exclaimed, "*It is I, recog-*" *nize me!* If there be amongst you one soldier "who would kill his Emperor, now is *his time.*" They were vanquished at once; and with repeated shouts of "*long live the Emperor,*" rushed forward to embrace the guard.

Another informant assured me, that immediately after his speech, Napoleon walked to a grenadier who had his musket presented, and taking hold of one his mustachios, said, *Et toi, vieille mustache, tu a été avec nous à Marengo!* The colonel did not tell me this; but the story is current at Paris, and it is certain that the 5th regiment had served under Napoleon in

Italy. The principal action is undoubted, and will be ever recognized as one of that kind, which, in all ages and nations, has decided under what master we ordinary mortals are to live. It is made the subject of one of the several engravings which now record the most singular passages in this late great transaction. Napoleon did well to thank the battalion of the 5th, and the two companies, in his speech at the review of the 26th of March in the Tuileries; in their hands were his life and destinies, and their return to their former general was considered by all his followers a decisive sign, that their master had not been deceived—that the army was still his own. The tricoloured cockade was assumed by the new reinforcements, who ranged themselves round the imperial eagles amidst the acclamations of the Elbese army, and that of the population of Vizille. Advancing towards Grenoble, the Colonel Termanouski was met by an officer on full gallop, who said, "I salute you on the part of the Colonel Henry Labedoyère." The colonel soon arrived at the head of the 4th regiment of hussars, carrying an eagle, which had been hidden in the military chest. The garrison of Grenoble had been augmented by a part of the 7th and the 11th regiments of the line, selected on purpose, as not being ac-

quainted with the Emperor's person, and sent from Chamberri. General Marchand, commanding the place, was faithful to the king. The regular force was composed of the 7th and 11th, 2000 of the third regiment of engineers, two battalions of the 5th, and the 4th of the artillery of the line, in which last regiment Napoleon had been raised to the command of a company twenty-five years ago. The 7th regiment marched out of the town at four in the afternoon to meet the invaders, but were ordered back by General Marchand. The whole force was ranged on the ramparts; the cannon were loaded, and the matches lighted; the national guards were drawn out in the rear of the regular troops, and were themselves backed by the mass of the population of Grenoble. The gates were shut at half past eight. Termanouski, with eight polish lancers, presented himself at the gate of Bonne, just as Napoleon entered the suburbs. He demanded the keys, and was answered, that General Marchand had secured them; but, at the same time, the garrison and the cannoniers, instead of firing as they were ordered, shouted *Vive l'Empereur*, and were joined by all the inhabitants on the ramparts and those of the suburbs, who now approached with axes and began to beat down the gate. The keys

were sent just as the gate was driven in; and the advanced guard, entering the town, were met by a crowd with torches, issuing out to meet Napoleon, who was soon seen walking alone, and some paces before his troops. The colonel told us that the crowd rushed upon him, threw themselves before him, seized his hands and knees, kissed his feet, and gave way to every demonstration of unbounded transport. The mayor and many of the municipality would have accompanied him to the town-house, but he slipped aside into the inn of one Labarre, an old soldier of his guard, and was there for some time completely lost to his staff, who became so much alarmed, that Termanouski and Bertrand, after many efforts, pushed their way into the room, and found the Emperor, unaccompanied by a single soldier, in the midst of a crowd, who were thronging about him in every direction to see, to speak to, and to touch him. The officers succeeded for a moment or two in clearing the room, and placed tables and chairs against the door, to prevent another irruption, but without success; for the crowd burst in a second time, and the Emperor was nearly two hours in their hands unattended by a single guard. It was during this period that the gate of Bonne was brought under the window of the inn by a vast body of people,

who cried out, "*Napoleon, we could not offer you the keys of your good town of Grenoble, but here are the gates.*"

The next day Napoleon received all the civil and military departments, reviewed his troops, and left Grenoble amidst the acclamations not only of the citizens, but of a large body of the neighbouring peasantry. He thanked them for their attachment in a printed address to the department of the Isère. The garrison of Grenoble marched immediately towards Lyons, having hoisted their tricoloured cockades, which, it is true, were found sewed in the bottom of their caps. Napoleon now got into a carriage which generally went a foot pace, and was not unfrequently impeded in its route, not only in the towns, but in the roads, by the crowds, who pressed by the side and loaded it with flowers and congratulatory addresses or petitions. The carriage sometimes was attended by half a dozen hussars, and others was without a single guard, and generally three leagues distant from any body of troops. On the 9th, Napoleon slept at Bourgoin, the same day that Monsieur, the Duke of Orleans, and the Count of Damas, arrived at Lyons, assembled the national guards, reinforced the garrison, and barricaded the bridges of the Rhone. The efforts of Monsieur to gain the soldiery and the people

were totally useless; his kindness, his caresses, were received in silence, or repulsed: stories, not worth repeating, are told of some pitiless repartees and replies made to his advances. The soldiers drew back even from the proffered hand of their royal general, who asked them, in accents of despair, "What he had done to lose, what he could do to regain, their favour?" Not a cry of *Vive le Roi* replied to the similar shouts of the mounted national guard, who escorted his royal highness. Marshal Macdonald arrived, and still continued to prepare for defending the passage of the Rhone, which the Emperor had ordered Marshal Bertrand to pass at Mirbell, so as to cut off the retreat of the princes to Macon. Two battalions were marched at three in the afternoon to the bridge of the suburb la Guillotiere; but no sooner saw the 4th hussars preceded by the population of that suburb, than they joined in the common cry, and assisted in throwing the barricades into the Rhone. The prince, and Marshal Macdonald, now retired from the town; at five the garrison marched to the same bridge to receive the Emperor; the imperial army entered Lyons at seven; and Napoleon himself, having countermanded the passage of Mirbell, arrived on horseback at nine o'clock, attended not by his guard, but a vast concourse

of the people of the suburbs and surrounding country. The next morning the Emperor reviewed the garrison as well as the mounted national guard, composed chiefly of nobles of the Lyonnais, who, after a thousand protestations of devotion in the morning, had suffered Monsieur to leave the place in the evening, attended only by a single dragoon; and the day after requested the Emperor to permit them to guard his person. Napoleon's answer is one of the extraordinary traits of character which distinguished and are recorded of his progress to his capital. "Your conduct," he replied to these faithful servants of the Bourbons, "to the Count D'Artois tells me how you "would behave to me in case of a reverse. I "thank you for your offer——you will return "immediately to your homes." The dragoon who did not abandon the prince was rewarded with the cross of the legion of honour by the Emperor upon his arrival at Paris. Napoleon remained ten days at Lyons, and dated from that town those decrees, by which it was clear that he considered himself as again in possession of the imperial throne. His reception in the second town of France justified this presumption. He mixed with the people in the streets, and at the ball which was given to him at the townhouse, with the same unsuspicious

confidence which had marked his former progress, and which was no less apparent during his advance upon the capital. This advance was continued under the same circumstances as had distinguished his approach to Lyons. He travelled often alone, or only escorted by a few Polish lancers, accompanied by the peasants on the roads, and surrounded by the citizens of the towns. Macon, according to Colonel Termanouski, was the only town at which he was obliged to ask for the residence of the Emperer; in every other place it was sufficiently known by a concourse shouting before the imperial quarters. At Autun, where he slept on the 15th, and at Avalon, where he passed the next night almost unattended, he was received with transport. He arrived at Auxerre on the 17th; there he was joined by Ney, whose troops had declared for him on the 13th, and also by the 14th regiment, who marched from Orleans, and continued their route to Paris, at which they arrived in six days and a half. He received also the news that the 6th lancers had hoisted the tri-coloured cockade, and had occupied Montereau. Here he embarked the Elbese, and the principal part of his army, which now amounted to four divisions, on the Yonne, and travelled in his carriage towards Fontainbleau: he generally changed

his horses on the outside of the town, that he might not be impeded by the crowd. He did this at Sens, where he was followed, however, and harangued by the mayor and municipality without the walls. He arrived at Fontainbleau at four on the morning of the 20th of March. There he reviewed a regiment of lancers in that court-yard, in which, eleven months ago, he had bid adieu to his army and to France. At seven, he learnt that Louis had fled from Paris; and at twelve, his army having arrived from Auxerre, he departed for the capital. Besides the troops of Elba, Grenoble, Lyons, and Lons le Saulnier, the Emperor's force had been augmented by a large body of officers of every rank; who, since his entry into Grenoble, had from all quarters joined the old guard, and formed themselves into what they called a sacred battalion: a great number of soldiers on half pay, or on leave, or dismissed, flocked also to the imperial standard. The peasants could with difficulty be prevented from marching with the army to Paris. The Emperor was met near Essonne by Count ———, formerly his aide-de-camp, who brought a superb carriage and six horses for him, as did many others of his partisans, to favour his entry into the capital. This was at six in the evening; Napoleon, however, remained in his travelling carriage, drawn by post-

horses, and unaccompanied, except by a crowd of generals and other officers, which prevented even his chariot from being seen. He entered Paris by the Boulevards neufs. The royal army, that had marched to oppose him in the morning, joined him near the gates of Paris; but the brilliant imposing scene described in the journals as occurring at Melun, did not take place. The five thousand young nobles of the royal body guard, who had taken leave of their friends in the morning, to fly to their posts and cover their king and their capital, were seen in the saloons in the evening, and told, how, finding themselves in their respective positions without any men to command, they had thought it advisable to be themselves the heralds of their retreat, and of their submission to the new order of things. Napoleon came through the gate of the Tuileries opposite the Pont royal, and alighted at the palace at eleven o'clock—a crowd of officers rushed upon him —in an instant he was carried off his legs —his hat fell off, and he was borne upon the shoulders of the eager multitude up the great staircase into his apartments, where he was welcomed by some ladies of his former court; one of whom, the most beautiful of the party, in a transport of delight, threw her arms round his neck, and burst into tears. From

Cannes to Paris is a computed march of forty-five days. The old guard, who left Essonne at two on the morning of the 21st, and arrived early enough for the review of the same day, were not half that time on their journey. It is a piece of common-place, but very true, to say, that history furnishes no example of a similar journey performed by any armed force, either in ancient or modern times. The Elbese battalion of the guard were individually rewarded with the cross of the legion of honour, which is by no means an insignificant distinction, as it confers on the lowest class a pension of more than two hundred francs, and entitles the bearer to the presentation of arms by every sentinel. The feeling with which this last honour is given and received, is no less gratifying to the man that pays, than to him who obtains the notice. The private soldier finds himself honoured in the attention shown to one of his own rank, distinguished only by a merit which he himself may with justice hope to emulate. He is, therefore, the more anxious to preserve every form and punctuality in this mark of deference, which his comrade, as it comes from an equal, is anxious to receive with proportionate respect. The mutual pride of the soldier-knight and the soldier-sentinel gives rise to a sentiment of self-

respect, the diffusion of which is alone sufficient to discipline an army; and of what service this institution has proved in the corps to which it has been most particularly applied, may be seen by the confession of the Abbé Montesquiou, from whom, in his speech to the chamber of deputies on the 14th, was wrung the flattering confession, that, "during ten months of peace, in the corps of the old guard quartered at Metz, amounting to five thousand men, not a single officer or soldier had been reprimanded even once." Yet this guard, "which reserved to itself the glory of being the model and the example of armies," is now condemned as a body of traitors, without one atom of honourable motive to exempt them from universal abhorrence and disgust. It is impossible to deny that the king's troops violated their oaths to Louis, as the English army on Hounslow Heath did to James; but this violation is of a nature that leaves its final denomination to be determined by events, which alone will shew whether their defection from the faith is to be styled a heresy or a reformation. An Englishman may not suspect that Marshal Ney furnishes a parallel that may turn out complete, if Napoleon succeeds, with the hero of Blenheim—with his own Marlborough, all of whose victories were not together so service-

able to his country as the single action, for which, in other circumstances, he would have suffered infamy and death—the desertion of his patron and his king. You may be assured, that the conduct of General Churchill, and the army, and the people of England, was not for some years found out to have been expedient, and just, and glorious; but was characterized in terms of reprobation similar to those of which we are now so liberal, when speaking of our cotemporaries on this side of the channel. Indeed, the portrait formerly drawn of a certain Christian nation by the hand of a master, so exactly tallies with that which we and our worthy allies attach to Frenchmen at this moment, that I venture to hint, that we may, without any prejudice to our honourable feelings, entertain some doubt of the infallibility and justice of those who designate the readoption of the Emperor by the troops and the people as an example of perjury and treason, altogether unparalleled, and too base to be justified upon any principle of expediency. You see, in what follows, as much horror at perjury, treachery, oath-breaking, and treason, as could be found in a letter of Lord Castlereagh's, or of our gracious Regent's to King Louis. "*As you have experience to know your subjects, so I know them by*

their character, and do believe them to be a people of no faith, no honour, and no honesty, whom no promise can oblige, nor oath can bind. They have sworn allegiance to you, and since accepted of . . . . . for their king, and swear allegiance to him. How this swearing to both can be reconciled I cannot understand: but let them swear what they will, I should not believe them, nor put any more value upon their oath than they do themselves, which is nothing at all. Neither do I understand how you can be assured of them that have no other assurance to give you of their future fidelity but their oaths, which are worth as much now as when they broke with your majesty last. It is out of my reach to put any trust in such people, neither would I have you confide in them; for I doubt much of their integrity."*

And who, think you, are thus described? Why, our English ancestors of that period, which to our eyes is the most glorious of our history. It is true that his majesty, the most Christian King, at whose charge the said nation were to be punished for their patriotic

* See A short and true Relation of Intrigues transacted both at home and abroad, to restore the late King James. Lord Somers's Tracts, Vol. xi. p. 100.

fault, had some little right to abuse them to his brother James, who had no great reason to be pleased with the direction taken by English honour; and the ministry of our times being determined to undertake a similar duty, may indulge in similar strains. Let them! but let not you and me, who are averse to their unjust interference, join in their unreasonable clamour.

We should consider, besides, that the renewal of the oath by the Parisian army is not so much to be charged to their treachery, as to the last struggles and manœuvres of the falling dynasty. There was no middle conduct for them to pursue, between an accession to the proposed oath, and an open resistance and violence perhaps to the persons of the Bourbon princes, which, as the utmost care was taken to deceive the capital as to the real strength of the invading Emperor, was not to be expected, and surely will not be regretted. The assurances of devotion transmitted from the departmental posts were the work of the royalist officers lately enrolled, and if they did not remain faithful, the disgrace is with them; if even they are not to be excused upon the universal revolt of the soldiery, which in some measure released them from their oaths. There are circumstances under which the

obligation of an oath, military or civil, ceases at once; and when that expressed or implied consent of a people to submit to authority, in conformity to which alone any oath can be taken, is clearly withdrawn, not only is that oath, however recent in its date, or solemn in its form and nature, necessarily annulled, but fidelity to our king becomes treason to our country. Without meaning to say that there is an exact parity in the adventures of Napoleon and William the Third, I do assert that the present outcry against the troops, who have rather recovered than deserted their standards, by ranging themselves under the imperial eagles, and again displaying the tricoloured cockade, would come with better grace and propriety from any other nation than from the one which is now enjoying all the benefits that can result from the desertion of a despot.

Before I close this letter I cannot help mentioning, that Napoleon, notwithstanding the fatigues of his late journey, to which some repose might have been granted, did not retire to rest until midnight, and was transacting business by four o'clock the next morning. At one in the afternoon of the 21st he reviewed the army of Paris and the guard of Elba. From the time of his arrival he has never laboured less than fifteen

hours a day. His frame of adamant alone could support the incessant toil of body and mind of this extraordinary mortal, who, when fatigued, was accustomed at Elba (so Captain ——— reports) to ride hard for three or four hours—*pour se delasser.*

Note 1.—The reader may add to the above remarks on the comparison between the landing at Torbay and at Cannes, that if some circumstances are more favourable to William than to Napoleon, there are others which tend to the preference of the latter exploit. The expedition of the Prince of Orange was not entirely English: that of the Emperor was exclusively French, both in its design and execution. The parallel between Ney and Churchill is altogether to the advantage of the former, inasmuch as the English general deserted *from* his patron, benefactor, and friend, but the French marshal *to* his protector, benefactor, and former chief.

Note 2.—Some English travellers visited Napoleon's palace at Elba soon after his departure, and found his establishment, his library, his apartment, and his furniture, exactly in the state he had left them. His old housekeeper, who had followed him through all his vicissitudes of fortune, was in the greatest distress, not about herself, but for his safety and success. Her unaffected expressions of attachment, and artless report of his uniform good humour, were better refutations of the hideous pictures drawn of his domestic manners than volumes written by the flatterers who so long attended and disgraced his court. His library was strewn with written papers torn into small bits, and on the table was lying open a life of Charles V., which he had been reading the night before he embarked.

LETTER VIII.

Paris, April —.

THE utmost celerity, courage, and address on one side might, perhaps, have failed to bring about the late events, had there not been an excess of delay, imbecility, and weakness on the other. It was not until the 5th of March that the debarkation of Napoleon was known at the Tuileries; and it was then judged expedient to circulate that the king was indisposed, instead of informing the capital of this strange fact, which was not announced until the 7th, when the Moniteur contained the convocation of the chambers, and an ordonnance of the king, proclaiming Napoleon and his adherents traitors. The Moniteur of the next day gave a telegraphic dispatch, and a few details relative to the landing at Cannes: and General Desolles made an appeal to the national guard. Whether the royal family were themselves deceived, or merely thought it politic to conceal the extent of their apprehensions, is uncertain; but every official report relative to the advance of Napoleon was

garbled or kept back to the latest moment. The bulletin in the Moniteur of the 9th gave an account of the advance to Grasse, but said that Napoleon's soldiers were selling their cartridges, and that the best spirit reigned every where. The Duke of Dalmatia published an address to the army. Sixty-nine deputies met on the 8th, and addressed the king the next day. The peers met on the 9th, and also addressed his majesty. Some of the court, however, at once foresaw the consequence of the landing, as if conscious of the apathy of the people and their disinclination to the royal throne. The Duke of——, meeting a friend of mine the day the news was published, exclaimed—*Mon ami, tout est perdu!* Yet such was the infatuation of others, that, at the Thursday's court, when the intelligence had reached Paris that Napoleon was at Lyons, the pleasantry of the day was, that as the monster would certainly be caught and caged, it might create some embarrassment to know where to confine him, unless he were domiciliated amongst his brother beasts in the Garden of Plants. The garrison of Paris and the national guards were reviewed by the Duke of Berri and the king on the 9th, and various addresses began to appear in the Moniteur. Marshal Moncey made an appeal to the gens d'armes of the kingdom. In

the Moniteur of the 11th, to the great surprise of Paris, it was said that Bonaparte would sleep at Lyons on the 10th: but up to the 12th it was asserted that the Elbese army had not been joined, except by some desperate individuals. On that day a confession was made that some defection had appeared at Laon, but had failed to delude the garrison. Marshal Soult, however, resigned, and the Duke of Feltre was appointed in his place. The best accounts came from Marseilles. The soldiers and officers on half pay, or on leave, were ordered to join their regiments by an ordonnance of the 11th. The chancellor gave an account of the progress of Bonaparte in his speech to the peers, and allowed that his emissaries might succeed to lessen the means of defence. The next day appeared a proclamation from the king to the people, and another to the army; as well as the order for forming battalions of royal volunteers: still it was said, that every thing wore a favourable aspect; and addresses poured in from all quarters. The Duke of Feltre ended a long speech on the 13th, by assuring the peers that the dispatches were *parfaitement rassurantes;* but nothing was said of Lyons. The president Laisné told the deputies that every one was at his post, and that all France was armed against the traitor. The Moniteur of the next

day, (the 14th,) contained information "*that a functionary in the Ardennes had been deprived of his office for pronouncing the forfeiture of some national property;*" and a motion was made in the deputies, "*to make proper provision for the widows and orphans of the officers of the legion of honour.*" The bait was too ridiculous. On the fifteenth the Moniteur declared that Bonaparte was at Lyons, with a harassed diminished force of 4000, and some few cavalry; that he was isolated as it were in the midst of France, and that the deputies which arrived from all parts of the country brought the most consolatory accounts of the spirit of the departments. The royal volunteers continued to inscribe themselves in numbers, that increased daily. The king declared that he trusted to the old guard, under the command of Marshal Oudinot, with the most entire unreserve; and the Abbé Montesquiou assured the chamber, that every account from the armies was of the most favourable nature. Marshal Ney was marching upon Lyons to fight the invader. The garrisons of La Fere, Lille, and Antibes, received the thanks of the legislature, as also did the Marshal Duke of Treviso, and Marshal Macdonald, the latter of whom refused this tribute for *nothing done*, in an angry letter to the president Laisné, who kept back the communication, but

was obliged to produce it the next day. On the 16th it was said that some troubles had been excited at Macon, Châlons, Tournus, and Dijon, and the department of the Aube, but only amongst the *dregs of the populace*; a term which, by this time, must be fully appreciated. These dregs, indeed, were all that were left of the people after the purer nobles had run away. The report of the 16th assured the Parisians that Napoleon was retreating upon Lyons, and that his troops were deserting him in whole masses. The following day it was said that he was directing his flying forces towards Dijon, pursued by Marshal Ney. Nothing was told of the retreat of the princes from Lyons; but the Count of Artois appointed a review for the 16th, to form "the legion of the colonel-general," of such as wished to serve with the line. The king held the royal sitting of the chambers on the 16th, and asked them "what he could better do at sixty years of age than die for the defence of his country." A ridiculous scene took place between him and Monsieur, who then, for the first time, swore to maintain the charter. On the 17th the defection of the army of reserve at Lons le Saulnier was known; from that moment the success of the invader was no longer doubted by any one not blinded by the falsities or the hopes of the court, which commenced its pro-

fession of the necessity of speaking truth, by uttering on the 18th a falsehood, which could only prove most ruinous to the cause; namely, *that the desertion continued in an astonishing manner in the troops of Napoleon, particularly in the cavalry, of which there remained only three hundred men, and that Grenoble, and probably Lyons, had thrown off his momentary yoke.* However, the Marshal Duke of Tarentum was appointed to the command of the army for the defence of Paris, and Count Maison ordered the garrison of the capital "to prepare for action." The confidential whisper hinted, that the determination of the new minister of war was to suffer Napoleon to advance to the gates of Paris, and there attack him, when beyond all hope of retreat, with the united forces of the king's household, the national guard, the royal volunteers, the troops of the first military division, and garrison of Paris. Nothing official was told of the desertion of Ney. The Duke of Berri had been named general of this army on the 11th, having under him Marshal Macdonald. The duke presumed to tell the marshal at first that he should place him on his staff. Macdonald answered, that he was ready to command under his royal highness, but that his rank would not allow of his taking a staff appointment. Upon which the prince is

said to have hinted that he would not have given such an answer to Bonaparte. "Perhaps not," was the reply, "but your royal highness is not Bonaparte." A similar story is told of a Dutch ambassador, who informed Charles the Second that Oliver Cromwell was quite a different sort of man from his majesty.

The marshal advised the duke to confide in the volunteer force, and not to expect that the regular regiments would fire against their old general; but the prince, who had other notions of his ability to command, and thought himself degraded by being put at the head of a volunteer corps, received the advice with displeasure. Hence his expression in the intercepted letter written to his father—"I do not like Macdonald*."

The advice of General Dessolles to unite the citizens with the soldiers was alike unattended to, in order, now say the king's friends, to spare the people; as if a man, who brings 1,100,000 men against his people, wishes to spare them.

The prince was aware afterwards of his mistake, and confessed his opinion in the hearing of my informant at Menin, that if Paris

* We may believe the report, that this same poor prince, whose aversion rises with his obligations, has since the second restoration designated the Duke of Wellington as a *parvénu*.

had held out until the arrival of the volunteers of the north, all would have been saved. He was also in that point wrong, but he at least acknowledged a former error. The Duke of Bourbon was sent into the west, notwithstanding the king is said to have refused to raise La Vendée. Full powers of enrolment were transmitted to the Duke of Angouleme in the south. The Duke of Orleans was charged with a mission to Peronne, where an army of reserve was to act under Marshal Mortier. So much had been said of the fidelity of the soldiers, particularly of the imperial guard, by the king's ministers, that, after the defection of Ney's troops had been known—after the Count of Artois had been unable to excite any enthusiasm in the national guard—after it was found that the organization of the volunteers and moveable columns furnished no more than 2000 men,—there yet appeared even on the 18th an order for the uniform of the royal volunteers—*pantalon de cheval, recouvrant la botte, gris mêlé foncé.* In the review of the national guard, when the count, surrounded by a splendid staff, appealed to the separate legions, and desired those who would serve out of Paris to advance from the ranks, using these words; *Point de confusion, messieurs; sortez l'un après l'autre ne vous pressez*

pas—it was observed, that this was the only order exactly obeyed—there was so little pressing, that scarcely more than a dozen men came forth from each legion, and there was one legion which furnished only one man. Indeed, from the appearance of the Tuileries on the 18th and 19th, when the very windows of that palace were filled with military of the household and the national guard, when nothing was talked of but the marching to Melun, Vincennes and Villejuif, the quiet and bloodless catastrophe that ensued would not have been expected by an unconcerned spectator of the scene. It does appear that the royal family and the ministry had already discovered every sign of extreme alarm, menaces impotent and retracted, concessions distrusted, flatteries despised, bribes, intreaties, appeals, prayers, and tears,—untimely—unavailing.

The pure royalists, who had at first affected to be pleased at the attempt of Napoleon, which would give the king an opportunity of knowing his true friends and crushing his enemies, did not fail, as this punishment appeared more problematic, to represent to the king the necessity of deferring it to another opportunity, and employing for the present those dishonest hands who might as well as others serve his

turn. The Duke of Feltre, who, in former times, was obliged to defend himself by a memorial now before me, against the charge of being concerned in the order to burn Paris, was named to the war department, and Fouché, a regicide, was offered the police. The latter told the king that he was too late in his application, and could do him no service. His majesty was mean enough to give orders for his arrest, an endeavour which was eluded by his escape into the house of a neighbour, a Chouan chief. To be sure the king should have known better than to have meddled with a man so secure of protection in every quarter. Count Rapp, and others of Napoleon's more intimate generals, were applied to, and indeed named to military divisions, but stated their inability to serve the Bourbon cause. Yet the Moniteur of the 19th contained another address from the king to the army; and an order of the day stated that Marshal Macdonald had taken the command in chief under the Duke of Berri, and would establish his head quarters the next day, the 20th, at Villejuif. The king's address threatened rebellious France 300,000 foreigners. One of the king's friends in the chamber of deputies, on the 18th, had the inconceivable boldness to recommend a levy in mass on the example of the levy in mass in 1789, when the whole nation and the

king conquered their rights from the privileged orders. In the same journal more than thirteen hundred persons were promoted to the cross of the legion of honour. It was owned that Bonaparte had left Autun the 15th, but his force was still treated as insignificant. Yet the king was not aware of the imminence of his peril. He was awakened in the night of the 19th to be told that Napoleon must have reached Fontainbleau, and that the carriages which would convey him from the capital were in waiting. He would not believe his enemy so near; and when he was persuaded of the fact, at first refused to rise. He talked of remaining in the Tuileries, or of marching to Melun. When he rose, however, and was lifted into his carriage, at half past one in the morning, he seems to have been not a little anxious as to the feasibility of his retreat; so at least I have been informed, through one of the national guard who assisted in persuading him to withdraw. It was not till seven in the morning that the foreign ministers received letters notifying the king's departure; and, by a singular coincidence, received, at the same time, invitations to court for the levée of the following Tuesday. This alone is sufficient to show that the royal family were taken by surprise—that they did not expect the arrival of

Bonaparte so soon. The same misinformation or self-deception is proved by the hasty departure of the minister, who left in the iron box at the hotel appropriated to the body guard the vast mass of state papers which have been found to compromise so entirely that respectable character M. de Blacas, and others of the king's ministers. The chest must have been carried to the hotel of the body guard for removal, for which the retreat of the minister was too precipitate. In the Moniteur of the 20th, the king took leave of his capital; "because, although he might have disputed the entrance of the rebels by arming the citizens, he shuddered at the calamities which a battle within the walls might draw down upon the inhabitants."* Here are two propositions, both equally true. The foreign ministers appear to have been as entirely in the dark as to the real instability and ruin of the royal throne as the Bourbons themselves. They made no preparation to depart, and were in Paris when Napoleon arrived. The continental ambassadors, who had, from old habits, been taught that existence and honour were not absolutely incompatible with a residence of a day or two in the capital of Bonaparte, were not in much hurry to demand their passports; and when they did make the demand, couched it in terms

* Appendix, No. 4.

with which the Emperor's minister could not refuse to comply. A worthy and gallant schoolfellow of ours happened, at that time, to represent the British nation at the court of France; and being placed by this occurrence, unexpected indeed by him, as appears by his dispatches, in circumstances which bore no resemblance to the "moving accidents by flood and field," with which he was so familiar, seems to have been overwhelmed by the prospect of the deadly breach which might be made in his diplomatic dignity, of the danger to which his own honour, and that of his country, might be exposed, either by detention, or by the seeming acquiescence of a moment, in the restoration of Napoleon. In the surprise and apprehensions, which the novelty of the circumstances might excuse, he applied for passports to join the King of France; and on receiving no answer to his request, is said to have suffered, for some days, a terror with which the armies of the dreaded usurper had never inspired him. Confused, perplexed, he at last learned from a countryman, that if he chose to withdraw, as the missions of other powers had withdrawn, he must follow the steps adopted by these gentlemen; he must apply not for passports to join the King of France, an unacknowledged inimical potentate, but for passports to return home.

He followed the advice, and had an imme-

diate answer in the affirmative from the Duke of Vicenza. Neither his lordship nor the Duke of Wellington's baggage was detained *; and after this trial, it may be expected that a clearer view of the sort of bloodless danger to which he was exposed will prevent a similar panic in any such diplomatic difficulties, and communicate the courage of the soldier to the inexperience of the secretary. Lord Fitzroy Somerset was one of the best scholars of his form in Westminster school—the pride of the master, and the favourite of such of his school-fellows as had the pleasure of his acquaintance. He has not dropped his capacity and attraction in the active scenes in which he has been employed so much to his own credit, and the service of his country. But the resolution of civil life, and what I shall call political presence of mind, are not the portion usually either of his age or profession; and it was unfortunately not much to the credit of our nation, that its representative should not be exempt from the terrors that drove every man, woman, and child, to the coast, in a flight

* Amongst the many falsities of the English newspapers, it was asserted that the noble secretary had been detained, and said the journal (the Sun) "we need not add the "Duke's *plate* was not permitted to leave Paris."

where neither the dignity of the one sex, nor the delicacy of the other, neither the strength nor the weakness of any age, seemed to be the object of regard. Nothing could show a more decided ignorance of the politics of France, of the feelings of the people, of the conduct which Napoleon, or any one at the head of the government, must necessarily pursue, than to apprehend the detention of our countrymen as the necessary consequence of the return of the Emperor. His former measure, however it might appear justified by the seizure of the French merchant vessels, previously to the declaration of war, in order to swell our iniquitous droits of admiralty, had been evidently against the general feeling in France; and as Napoleon could not hope to succeed, except by an anxious deference to that feeling, and as it must no less clearly be his interest to refrain from every irritating measure against England, no Englishman needed, upon reflection, to have dreaded a repetition of the former injustice, and a visit to Verdun. One of the first inquiries, made by Napoleon upon his return, of one of the ladies of his court, was, if many English were in Paris? and on hearing nearly all of them had retired, he exclaimed, "Ah! they recollect what I did before, but those times are

past." Our politicians, and notably our ministers, are blind to all seasons and their change —regulated by their own precious precedents, the canons of folly, inattentive to, or extracting nothing from, the varying march of manners, principles, and times, they are incapable of conceiving that any one should be found willing to resign a favourite system, merely because a change of circumstances should appear to render it inapplicable, and therefore unwise. With some people, the times that require and justify violence and revenge are never passed. Our ministers, as I mentioned in my first letter, certainly expected an immediate irruption into Belgium, and a recurrence of all those harsh, impetuous, rapid measures of open force which before distinguished the enterprises of Napoleon—as certainly did they know nothing of France;

"And having once been wrong, will be so still."

But if the Bourbons themselves knew nothing of the true state of their affairs, you cannot expect our minister to have had any acquaintance with them, when, with the ingenuous unsuspicious candour of a soldier and a youth, he put his entire trust in the court of the Tuileries, and favoured his own cabinet with the im-

partial statements of the Abbé Montesquiou and M. de Blacas. It was the endeavour of former ambassadors to make the most of the cause of their own countrymen at the court to which they were sent; and it would be scandal to assert that the modern rule of our diplomatists is to consult the interests and to create a cabal, both at home and abroad, in favour of that particular potentate to whom they are attached; or that our legations at the separate capitals, and at the head-quarters of the European monarchs, are but so many agents of foreign powers employing themselves to direct the resources of their own country to that one of the magnanimous sovereigns of whose suite they happen to be the honourable appendage, and whose splendour and preponderance they are accustomed to consider as their own. Russia, Austria, Prussia, nay even the *roitelets* of Palermo, Brussels, Stockholm, and Stutgard, might, were this the case, have each an advocate at the cabinet of St. James's, whom they would not need be at the charge of paying, except with some paltry ribbon, that would put him in the first, second, or third class of the court sewers or apothecaries; and our agents would have no other employment than that of finding out, in the course of their commerce with the prince or his ministers, how short is the distance between a devoted ad-

mirer and an egregious dupe. The Metternichs, the Hardenbergs, the Nesselrodes, might then hug themselves at the facility with which an English diplomatist might be converted into an useful agent, to increase the subsidies, and diminish the pretensions of his own court. The supposed rivalry of the separate British missions, to augment the importance and extol the sincerity of their own *foreign* prince, in annihilation of all selfish interest for their employers, has, indeed, amongst those I presume unacquainted with the truth, been one of the diversions of all the many congresses, head-quarters, conferences, &c. of these three years. We at home have missed the pleasantry, but the scandal may hit us at last.

Note.—If praise from such a quarter might not look like presumption in the author, or might not possibly have even a baneful effect upon its object, Sir Charles Stuart, his majesty's present ambassador at the court of Paris, should be excepted by name from every thing said in any degree unfavourable to our English agents abroad. No one who has had the satisfaction of seeing that gentleman can doubt that a better selection could not have been made from our diplomatic body to fill so important a mission.

LETTER IX.

Paris, April.

The king retreated to Abbeville; and it should appear, by the Universal Journal published at Ghent, that he thought of making some stand there. He might have mistaken the facilities afforded to his retreat for an inclination in some portion of his people not to abandon his cause; but on the 21st, at twelve o'clock, Marshal Macdonald arrived from Paris, and represented the necessity of retiring towards the frontier. The king had wished to fix upon Lille for the head-quarters of his household troops, and was disappointed at hearing that the Duke of Treviso had remarched the garrison into the town: he arrived there, however, on the 22d, at one o'clock, and was well received by the inhabitants, but by the troops in silence.

The declaration of the 13th of March here reached his majesty, who hoped, by the dispersion of this document, to frighten the French into a return to their allegiance, and

accordingly took care to placard it in the town. The effect was contrary to his expectations; for so alarming were the appearances of the next day, that Marshal Mortier was obliged to inform Louis that he could not answer for the garrison, and that an immediate retreat was necessary. The king took the road to Menin, which was in possession of an English regiment, the colonel of which, upon receiving notice that his majesty was approaching, thought it his duty, upon advice from General Vandeleur, to state in reply, that no French troops would be allowed to pass the frontier. A picquet of the national guard of Lille, and about two hundred cuirassiers, formed the whole escort; but these took leave of the king at the barrier, where also Marshal Macdonald left him. The marshal has since returned to his country seat; and although Napoleon has sent two messages to see him, he has persisted in his retreat. His constancy is still a topic of admiration even amongst the friends of the court; so much so, that the amiable Madame —— was pointed out to me by the following half serious designation—"That is the daughter of the only "honest man in France, and very fairly piques "herself upon the fidelity of Marshal Mac-"donald."

Louis left France unaccompanied by a single soldier—only a drunken dragoon on a lame horse pushed his way after him through the British picquets, and toppled into Menin crying *vive le roi.* He waited in his carriage, drawn up at the inn door, half an hour, for post horses, one of those trifling but levelling wants which must have told him he was king no more. An English officer approached, and asked whether he would accept of a guard of honour—he said he should be thankful for a few dragoons, and also for an estafette, which should order thirty horses at the next and following posts. Never was a crown so won and lost. Napoleon travels to his capital as Louis leaves it, in a chariot; and the lives and fortunes of the invading as well as the retreating monarch, seem to have been intrusted principally to post-masters; one of whom, had he been like the man who stopped Louis XVI. at Varennes, might have changed the destinies of France. Four thousand of the king's household, under the order of Monsieur and the Duke of Berri, and Marshal Marmont, directed themselves to the frontier, where, being refused entrance into Dutch Flanders, they were disbanded by Monsieur in the neighbourhood of Bethune, in which place they were shut up, and received the orders of Napo-

leon relative to their final destination. Only about 200 of the household, with a major-general at their head, after great difficulties, have been at last allowed to pass into Flanders —and this is the French force with which Louis is to recover his crown. The Universal Journal says nothing of the real cause which prevented the household from following the king, but ascribes to the miry roads and marshes that impediment which was produced only by the jealousy of the court of Brussels. A General Ricard, who came in with the king, was even sent under a guard to Courtray; such was the apprehension of French interference in the affairs of the Netherlands, and in the common cause of Europe. The same Journal asserts, that an order to arrest the king and princes arrived at Lille both before and after the king's departure; but that Marshal Mortier, to whom it was addressed, took care not to publish it, until the Duke of Orleans, some hours after Louis, had left the town. The Duke of Berri told Colonel Morris at Menin, my informant, of the same fact. If it be true, I am one of those who regret that it was not carried into effect. No measures of violence would have been pursued with the Bourbon princes. The conduct of Napoleon to the Duke of Angouleme suffi-

ciently shews the line of policy which he thinks most suitable to the occasion, and most agreeable to the French; and the detention of the dethroned family within the French territory would, perhaps, have been a guarantee against the unjust interference of the allies. I cannot doubt that Napoleon might have prevented the flight of the king from Paris; and that, if the order to prevent his escape did arrive at Lille, it was only sent in consequence of the intelligence received, that Louis did not intend to retire without trying to occupy the garrison towns of the north. If the Emperor has not a right to say, as he does, that the proclamation of Louis, offering a reward for his head, would give him a pretext for retaliation against the Duke of Angouleme, he may at least assert, that since the occupation of the capital, and the acquiescence of the greater part of France, any attempt to dethrone him, a king *de facto*, may fairly be regarded as a national treason. The dispersion of the Vienna declaration of the 13th of March at Lille, clearly made Louis amenable to the jurisdiction always exercised by a sovereign power against those who attempt its overthrow. No personal injury was ever intended against the Bourbons by the imperial government. Had the republic been established,

perhaps their sacrifice might have been deemed necessary—Napoleon, having saved the nobles and the priests, has saved the king. But, I repeat, it is to be regretted that the flight of Louis and the royal family has not been prevented. From the days of the Pisistratidæ and the Tarquins down to those of the Stuarts and the Bourbons, the pretensions of dethroned dynasties have always been an instrument in the hands of foreign ambition, as well as a source of internal division and treason. The appeal to the sword (unfortunately the only true touchstone) tried, indeed, and confirmed the liberties of Athens, and of Rome, and of England; but the circumstances of France, and the character of her present sovereign, are such as may make a victory fatal to her freedom. At least such are the apprehensions, whether well founded or not, of many honest constitutionalists, who are, therefore, justified in wishing that the arrest of the fallen family had taken away one engine and excuse from the enemies of France. The dispersion of the declaration of the 13th of March, and the subsequent proclamation of Louis, in which France is menaced with eleven hundred thousand foreign bayonets, daily strengthen these regrets; and if William the Third publicly repented of having facilitated the retreat of his father-in-law from England, which he did in a memorial

addressed to all the courts of Europe, it may surely be permitted the French patriots to deprecate their clemency to a monarch, who threatens to return amongst them at the head of a foreign force ten times more considerable than that employed by Louis the Fourteenth in support of the miserable James.

I must say, to the honour of the constitutionalists, that they are not terrified, and that those amongst them who have no attachment to Napoleon would again assist in the expulsion of the princes, were it to be done again, and were it certain to bring down upon them the fiery trial which they are now told they must certainly undergo. It was seen in the late disasters of the Bourbons, amongst what men all prudent monarchs should choose their friends. When all the base had deserted the royal cause, and all the vain—when even the court partizans and ministers were lost in irresolution and fear, and far the greater part began so to trim the balance of their conduct as to prepare for the preponderance of either scale—when the awed satellites of the throne would not look the approaching danger for an instant in the face, and prepared for the reception of a new, rather than a defence of their present, master—who was it that, in spite of prejudices, in spite of the chance of apparent inconsistency, in de-

fiance of the threats of enemies, or the suspicions of friends, of a peril almost certain, stepped boldly forwards to defend the king—to plead his cause—to rouse the people in his defence, in direct opposition to, and preference of, the resistless hero, marching with giant strides to his overthrow? Was it a courtier, one glittering with the rays of royal bounty, whom the fall of the king would ruin, the return of Napoleon destroy? Was he found amongst the friends or the favourites of the monarch,—the patrons or the stipendiaries of despotism,—the paid defenders or the rewarded pensioners, the expectant or the grateful servants, of the court? No. He was a patriot, known and proscribed for the freedom and courage with which he had censured the measures of the king's ministers, and had held up their infractions of the constitution to the scorn and hatred of his countrymen. Such was the man who, thinking the establishment of a military government the natural consequence of the return of Napoleon, and knowing that government incompatible with the rights of individuals, called upon France and Frenchmen to defend their king, whose errors they might pardon and correct, against an enemy, whose principles were so much more dangerous to their liberties and to their repose. It was not a foolish, personal

attachment to the king, nor a still more foolish feeling of loyalty, which prompted Mr. Comte to publish his tract intitled "*De l'Impossibilité d'établir un Gouvernement Constitutionnel sous un Chef Militaire, et particulièrement sous Napoleon.*" It was his persuasion that by this decisive step (taken by one well known as the editor of the Censor for his opposition to the government) the friends of freedom in the capital might be able to distinguish between the reform which he proposed and the attempted overthrow of the government; and might oppose themselves to the pretensions of a man more dangerous to their honourable cause than the sovereign whom he advanced to dethrone. We may not attach much consequence or courage to the publication of a pamphlet, which in our country might involve some speculative point of political theory, and expose its author only to the criticism of a review, or, at the worst, the animadversion of a judge; but in France, and particularly in the manner in which Mr. Comte appeared as an author, the writer holds the pen as he would the sword, in a mortal debate, decisive of his freedom, his property, and his life. He steps forward, the combatant in a controversy in which those who deal in the paper bullets of the brain are, like the trumpeter in the fable,

ranged with, and share all the fortunes of, those who wield the weapons of death. The struggles of our statesmen and writers are, comparatively speaking, only a continuation of our school discussions on abstract questions, which may be decided either way without being productive of any immediate visible effects, either to the audience or the arguers; but, when a Frenchman writes or talks on politics, he must tremble at the differences which a period turned to the right or to the left, a paradox begun in sport and supported out of vanity, an argument stretched to the verge of ingenuity, or a play of rhetoric too irresistible for an author, may perhaps create, in the dearest and immediate interests of himself, his friends, and his country. When we weep or smile in declamation it is for Hecuba, but in France the authors are actors, and play a part in a real tragedy—their own. Those who have not lived some time in Paris can have no notion of the infinite importance attached to the periodical and other political publications,—of the eagerness with which they are read by all classes of people,—of the whisper which runs through all the saloons upon the appearance of such or such an article in a newspaper or other journal, which is hinted to be from the pen of some known writer,—and of the care taken by

the chiefs of parties to have at their disposal the columns of some popular sheet. Notwithstanding the censorship, means were found, in the king's time, to give a distinct voice to all opinions. The Nain Jaune, a yellow-covered pamphlet, published five times a month, of whom Mr. Etienne, the dramatic author, was the reputed editor, established from the 15th of December, 1814, a reputation which its preceding numbers had never obtained. The pleasantries of this work were the chief instruments employed to make the emigrant, anti-liberal, system ridiculous; and these were found very poignant, although an Englishman might think the materials too serious for a joke.

The Nain Jaune mixed and mixes literature with politics; dealing in that abusive lopping sort of criticism of which Mr. Geoffrin was the successful inventor, but which appears to one of our nation most dull and ineffectual. A review, which *was* the Satirist, is a tolerable compeer of the Nain Jaune, as far as its literary character is concerned. The state of critical or rhetorical composition in France is now at a very low ebb, perhaps partly because the subject is too important, and touches the writers too nearly, to enable them to compose with the caution and coolness requisite for excellence in

any species of writing. The Nain Jaune, which owed all its success to a sprightly opposition to the court, has fallen lamentably since the fall of the knights of the *extinguisher* and of the weathercock. Its humour is dried up in the sunshine of its patron court. Certain of the newspapers were avowedly in the hands of this or that faction; for example, the Quotidienne was known to speak the sentiments of the emigrants, and the paragraphs in that journal were anxiously perused by the large portion of the nation who had purchased the national properties. The daily papers, being subject to the censorship, could only hint a fault now and then, and hesitate dislike; but Messrs. Comte and Dunoyer, passing beyond the sixty pages prescribed by the law, contrived in the Censor, which they published once a month, to show themselves the true friends of liberty and France, by exposing the conduct of those who endeavoured to nullify or counteract the benefits of the constitutional charter. They met with the usual fate of those who wish to enlighten their countrymen—were grossly insulted as the enemies of order and law, in morals, religion, and politics, and were denounced as the friends and accomplices of the last tyrant.

No sooner had the news of Napoleon's land-

ing arrived, than they gave the king's ministers to understand that their efforts were at the service of his majesty, that all calumny and insult were forgotten, and that they should do their utmost to serve their countrymen in that way which appeared to them the most effectual—in the defence of their sovereign. The pamphlet appeared:—it was written in the true spirit of freedom, with an honourable frankness, but at the same time with a generous, a loyal confidence; insisting upon no niceties, nor conditions, nor distinctions, but going at once to the point, and telling their countrymen that it was their duty and their interest to stand by a government which *was a hundred times preferable* to that which the return of Napoleon would inevitably restore.

Such is the difference between the friends of an individual system or government, and the friends of a cause, which, as it encourages, calls every honourable quality into action—between the servants of a king and those of a people, whose interests, as they never vary, so can they be easily understood and easily pursued; and whose rights, as they involve considerations deservedly dear to every individual, so must they necessarily call forth defenders respectable by their numbers, their courage, and their zeal. Mr. Comte could not save Louis, but he was able to

teach him that most important lesson, that the only true, the only serviceable friends of a constitutional king are the friends of the people—those whom his courtiers are ever ready to brand as the patrons and promoters of sedition and revolt.

There are not a few politicians in this place who are of opinion, that an entire and pure transplantation of the Hartwell court to Paris would have prevented the late catastrophe; and that the King was lost by an endeavour to reconcile and amalgamate contending factions, and to gain the affection and support of a powerful party by attentions which served only to shew his weakness and augment their presumption. I think I have told you that two of the ancient noblesse did not hesitate to remark to me, even in a place of public resort, that Louis should have followed the example of Ferdinand. It is possible that by rallying round him all the partisans of despotism, and by a violent re-establishment of the ancient monarchy, he might have held the reins of power in despite of the will of a people wearied by war, and dreading the renewal of any military exertions. It is possible he might, by this system, have reigned more than eleven months; he might have reigned fifteen; and he would have had the honour of falling in a general massacre

of all his friends, at the last ruin of the royal cause in France. It must be owned, that any monarch in the situation of Louis the Eighteenth must have experienced difficulties almost inextricable in the choice of his ministers. A principle of gratitude must have induced him to pay some attention to the crowd of emigrants by whom he was besieged, and who were not content with any system which did not afford them exclusive right to share the rewards and direct the conduct of the court. Besides the emigrants who returned immediately with the king, there was another class of those who had temporised under Napoleon, and who brought all the baseness of the imperial court to bear upon the returned dynasty, and instructed in some sort their brother nobles and the king in the arts of despotism. This party, distinct in some measure from the personal friends of Louis, were still most ready to promote the projects of absolute power, and, as they sometimes proposed measures which their less hardy colleagues were too timid to hazard, were the cause of repeated dissensions and discord in the new cabinet. The French themselves accuse the public functionaries, the *employed*, those of any mark or influence, who have lately risen into notice and wealth in their country, as more corrupt, vicious, and selfish, than the same class of men in any other nation.

Luxurious and lazy, consequently no less greedy and venal than ignorant and vain,—accustomed to consider the necessity for honesty and exertion as altogether superseded by the commanding influence of the French fortune and name in in foreign politics, and in domestic relations by artifice, intrigue, and servility—living in a round of frivolous pleasures, which tend no less than their tricky employments to destroy every virtuous sentiment, and to finish the accomplished egotist—these men could give neither credit nor stability to the government; but being a portion of the machine, were still considered indispensable to the ordinary movement and progress of the state. From amongst these the king thought himself obliged to fill a certain number of his charges: they did not betray him; but they did nothing for him; they thought only of themselves; and, without courage, though too indifferent for premeditated treachery, were ready to receive any other master at a moment's warning. Serviceable, perhaps, whilst solely the automata of despotism, they wanted individual importance to fill the offices of a government in which the forms at least of freedom prevailed. Not that amongst the new ministers, employed formerly by Napoleon, there were not some few men, whose known activity and address might have recommended them to the choice of the

restored king, and whom he might with propriety have employed. It was natural, however, that their former attachments should render them suspected, and that the companions of his exile should exclaim against such a selection as treason to his own cause and crown, and as ingratitude to themselves. M. de Talleyrand himself was tolerated only in proportion as he was known to be the personal enemy of Napoleon, and was by the pure royalist looked upon as the revolutionary leaven, which might cause a ferment in the state. Hence the king was persuaded not to appoint that person first minister, and by so doing give an unity and responsibility to the administration, so necessary for his own affairs, and so ardently desired by the nation. Louis, the weight and precision of whose sayings form a strange contrast with his conduct, on learning the general inclination in favour of that appointment, remarked, "They should not be angry with me for this—*ce n'est pas une place que j'ote à M. de T. c'est une place que je réserve à moi-même.*" But what would do for Louis the Fourteenth, or Charles the Twelfth, or Napoleon, fitted not Louis the Eighteenth.

If the prejudices of the King's friends were unfavourable to M. de Talleyrand, much more was it natural that they should be so to the decided constitutionalists, amongst whom, those

who might, from their experience and courage, have been the most serviceable to him, were all little less than odious as the murderers of his brother, or, according to the etiquette of the church and state, were to be supposed as such. It would hardly be expected that he should call to his councils the Carnots and Fouchés, although certainly nothing would have been more fortunate than such a choice. In this embarrassment whom then was he to select? His only expedient, it is now allowed, and we may say proved, was to have thrown himself into the arms of the nation, to have given rewards, but not power, to the friends of his exile and his family, and to have called around him neither the agents of Coblentz nor of the imperial court, but honest men, entirely new, energetic, and enlightened, the offspring of the present age, whom a popular representation, freely chosen, would have drawn from the obscurity of private life, and brought into the active service of the state. Aware of the difficulties of his position, and making allowances for the perversities of prejudice, and the infirmities of age, we must still wonder that Louis only shewed his individual inclination for consulting the wishes of the people; and that whilst his own private views and opinions, whenever he was called upon to declare them, had the semblance of liberality

and justice, he should have suffered such men as d'Ambray, Montesquiou, and Ferrand to be the organs of the royal will. Whilst the friends of the people looked up to that portion of the administration headed by Talleyrand, and to the military officers of state, whose services had made their fortunes, the pure royalists reposed all their hopes in the above ministers, and in the known inclinations of the princes of the blood. Each party regarded the favourite *de Blacas* as one who might be bribed. It may then be only justice to charge many of the follies of the last short reign upon a weak discordant administration: but this consideration, although it may diminish the personal culpability of the king, does not prove that the people were wrong in judging him unfit to reign. He might have chosen his ministers amongst their friends; he might have thrown himself into their arms; whereas, on the contrary, on many occasions he gave evidences of his looking upon them in some sort as the accomplices or immediate actors in his brother's murder; for, not content with excluding from public duties such as had actually been concerned in that deed, he took care to refresh, at every opportunity, his indignant abhorrence against the act, which, whether of justice or vengeance, was at least national, and which therefore it was absolutely

necessary for the pride or the repose of all Frenchmen either to justify or to forget. Louis began his reign by saying mass for the soul of his brother; he next instituted a fête similar to that of the day "when every sovereign in Europe rises with a crick in his neck," and he quoted the example of Charles II., as a worthy precedent for his proceeding. Little doubt have I but that his ministers, at least, would have liked to complete the parallel. Carnot and Fouché would have looked as well in an execution list as Harrison and Cooke. Then was performed the last office of fraternal piety by this bone-collecting court. Between these acts there was a perpetual playing off of court horrors and antipathies; at the very sound or smell of regicide. The coaches of the king never drove over the "*place Louis Quinze*," because in that square his brother lost his head; as little would the royal family walk upon the terrace of the Seine raised by Napoleon, for that commanded a view of the same fatal spot. The Duchess of Angouleme never looked at a Parisian crowd without shuddering, as if beholding the children and champions of revolution. If at the Tuileries she saw a lady of the imperial court, she passed over on the other side. Her jealousy descended upon the children of those that had hated her father; and from this jealousy the representative

of the Orleans branch of the royal family was by no means free. The manners of this prince, tinctured with the kindness and facility generally acquired by a variety of fortune and experience, the education he had received in the arms as it were of the republic, the fate of his father which conferred upon him the fraternity of a common crime; all these considerations endeared him to the French, and drew upon him the suspicion and the hatred of the court, which arose at last to a height so indecent and ridiculous, that the court confessor in his sermon at St. Denis, over the interment of the royal bones, took the opportunity of what is called in our vernacular *preaching at* the Duke of Orleans, who was twice or thrice tempted to rise and leave the church. The court at the *Palais Royal* became too well attended. I hear that *it was shut by a proposal coming from his Majesty.* It must be allowed the subsequent conduct of the Tuileries created a cause for suspicions, which, in the beginning, were totally groundless; for it is said of the duke, "he would not be of the Orleans' party." I have every reason to know that a very considerable party both of the loudly active and the silently assenting were prepared for a movement in favour of the duke, as the only means of reconciling the republicans, and those attached to the forms of royalty; of quieting the alarms of

those who dreaded a reaction from an unsullied Bourbon, and of those who were averse to the extreme experiment of an entire revolution and change of dynasty. Were I to say that the crown was positively offered to the Duke of Orleans, I should say too much; but I may assert, that had he stretched out his hand it would have been within his reach. He did not move a finger—on the contrary, when something stronger than a hint was given him, that a powerful and prepared portion of the Parisians, and the departments, only waited his signal to proclaim the king and his immediate heirs incompetent and deposed—the intelligence was not made of any service—nay, more, it was carried to Louis. I have frequently heard it said in Paris, "we should have been glad of the Duke of Orleans, but he would not listen to us—now it is too late,—the place is occupied." The inclination for the duke is another proof of that which I have so frequently asserted, that there was no previous conspiracy contrived for the restoration of Napoleon.

The Emperor took his seat on his former throne, because it was acknowledged by the national feeling to be empty, and no other candidate offered for the vacancy. Had there been another pretender, it would be

hazardous to say, that Napoleon would have been preferred: he might have seized the throne; but that he would have united the great majority of France as he has done at this moment is not so clear; neither is it evident that, even without a competitor, he would have regained possession thus peaceably, unless the declaration of the allies and the conduct of Louis had rendered it a point of honour to every Frenchman to shew that he was not to be frightened into the deposition of one king, and the choice of another. I must now declare a truth, which my respect for the cause with which he is at present identified makes me unwilling to own. Napoleon is *not popular*, except with the actual army, and with the inhabitants of certain departments; and perhaps, even with them, his popularity is only relative. At no place is there so great a portion of the population decidedly averse to him as at Paris. The nobles of St. Germain are his declared foes—they have seceded: the shopkeepers, whose interest is connected with peace, wish him no good, as long as they see in him a promise of perpetual war. Hence, Paris, on the entry of Napoleon, presented but a mournful spectacle. The crowd, which went out to meet the Emperor, remained in the out-

skirts of the city; the shops were shut—no one appeared at the windows—the boulevards were lined with a multitude collected about the many mountebanks, tumblers, &c., which for the two last days had been placed there in greater numbers than usual by the police, in order to divert the populace. There was no noise nor any acclamations; a few low murmurs and whispers were alone heard, when the spectators of these open shows turned round to look at the string of six or eight carriages, which preceded the imperial troops. The regiments then passed along, and cried out *Vive l'Empereur;*—not a word from any one. They tried the more popular and ancient exclamation, *Vive Bonaparte;*—all still silent. The patience of the dragoons was exhausted; some brandished their swords, others drew their pistols, and rode into the alleys amidst the people, exclaiming, "*crie, donc, Vive l'Empereur!*" but the crowd only gave way, and retreated without uttering a word. Lady ——— was present,—I have the account from her. You may wish me to reconcile this with my former statements; but I beg you to recollect, that it is my purpose only to tell you what I know and believe to be true; and that the variety produced by difference of place, of time, of circumstance, both in the optics seeing, and the object

seen, may account for that which may at first appear a *discrepancy* in myself, and that, at the worst, the contradiction is not in me, but in human nature. To expect that uniformity of character and conduct in a whole nation, or any collected portion of it, which is scarcely ever to be found in a single individual, is the folly of a child, conversant only with the reconciled inconsistencies, or adjusted improbabilities, of a novel. Human character is, in the gross, like the individual of Horace, "*impar sibi.*" Impatience of consistency is allowed to distinguish this people above all others; I know not whether you will admit that it is a proof of their superior spirituality. Another poet tells us, that the generous courser "knows not how to stand still;" but a jockey might impute this rather to constitution, than to superior condition or better blood.

LETTER X.

Paris, May.

THE truth of what is stated in my last, that Napoleon did not remount the throne by virtue of his previous popularity, is shewn by the many measures which he has adopted to gain that popularity since his return. He has taken especial care to recognize the sovereignty of the people as the only source of legitimate power. The new council of state, in its first meeting, recognized *que la souveraineté réside dans le peuple, seule source légitime du pouvoir.* The avowal of these principles might have been expected from the Carnots and the Benjamin de Constants, whose appointment to the places which they occupy is a guarantee of the intentions of the government, and of the confidence which, for the present at least, it seems calculated to inspire in the true well-wishers of France. The nomination of Fouché, who cannot be suspected of any private inclination for the Emperor, is considered, even by the royalists themselves, as a protection against the renewal of the arbitrary measures, in which con-

sisted what Napoleon, after the fashion of other tyrants, chose to regard as the vigour of the imperial government. Napoleon cannot but see, that if he does reign, it must be by the title on which he has founded his right: for since the few weeks of his present power, he has experienced the force of public opinion, (to which he made originally so successful an appeal) in instances too decisive to admit of more than one interpretation even by the self-love of a sovereign. A decree of the 24th of March abolished the censorship, still leaving a supervisor attached to each of the daily papers, and subjecting the printers and booksellers, to a limitation as to their number, to a certain form of oath, to the necessity of declaring all works previously to printing them and of depositing a certain number of copies at the police before publication. The editors of the Censor, who had distinguished themselves by their courage during the days of doubt, in one of the articles of their fifth volume, just published, seem inclined to admit, that the time-serving character of the chief part of the journalists is more owing to their own baseness, than to any arbitrary measures taken by the government. Upon this supposition they dare to say in one article, "*un mouvement de troupes, approuvé ou non par le vœu secret des*

" *citoyens, force les Bourbons à sortir de France,* " *et disperse les élémens de notre constitution poli-* " *tique ; cette opération militaire ne présente en elle-* " *même aucun caractère legal.*" And in another place, " *mais l'expulsion des Bourbons ne peut pas* " *donner naissance à des droits en faveur d'un* " *autre ; et de quelque manière qu'on envisage les* " *choses, on ne peut s'empêcher de convenir que le* " *gouvernement actuel n'est qu'un gouvernement* " *provisoire, où que le peuple Français est la pro-* " *prieté du premier occupant . . . . . Et peu im-* " *porte que Napoleon ait été proclamé empereur* " *par l'armée et par les habitans des pays où il a* " *passé; peu importe que les puissances coalisées* " *aient ou non tenu les conventions qu'elles avaient* " *faites avec lui. La France n'appartient ni aux* " *soldats, ni aux habitans qui se sont trouvées sur* " *la route de Cannes à Paris, ni aux armées coa-* " *lisées.*" The article ends by saying, that, for the present, the government ought to be obeyed, when it commands in the name of the laws; but that nothing can save France finally, except an assembly of the people freely chosen, and deliberating freely. The same volume contains, besides, many direct attacks on the conduct of Napoleon. Now it must be owned, that our notion of the liberty of the press does not extend to the publication of opinions relative to the present

rights of actual monarchs; and that, if no previous prevention of such discussion is admitted by our law, the circumstances of our monarchy render them so very unlikely ever to be called into play, and the subsequent punishment of opinions, similar to those above quoted, would be so severe, that the Englishman who held such a pen in one hand should hold a sword in the other. According to the laws restored by the imperial decree of the 24th, this volume of the Censor was announced, and a certain number of copies deposited at the police. After what you have read, are you astonished that the whole impression was seized? and do you not think such a seizure preferable, if not in principle, at least in practice, to the English penalties of libel? However, a considerable commotion was excited by this measure: the saloons, the gardens of the Tuileries, and the Palais Royal, were loud in their murmurs. A report was spread, that the publication was delayed by the editors themselves; but these gentlemen immediately sent a circular letter to their subscribers, stating, in strong terms, that the rumour was fabricated, was false entirely, and that the truth was, the whole impression had been stopped hy the *police*. This determination on the part of Messrs. Comte and Dunoyer had its effect: the Censor was

re-delivered to them, and appeared on the 26th of April, not only with all the offensive matter in it, but also with additional hints as to the influence "*de la moustache sur le raisonnement;* "*et de la necessité du sabre dans l'administration.*" It inserted besides a solemn retraction of that article before mentioned, relative to the liberty of the press. No notice was taken of the printers or authors of these articles, which would have called down hard words, and perhaps hanging, in the court of a Tresilyan, or a Page.

I put this down as the first proof of the force of opinion, which has given to the press of Paris an actual license beyond what the most ardent friend to freedom can admire, and which indeed the government, if it stands, cannot permit. It is allowable, that the author of a journal called the Old Republican should take upon himself periodically to remind Napoleon, that the people have made him a monarch, and that to their interests and wishes he must be subservient. It is but reasonable, that objections should be made to the form and substance of the new constitutions, even in the most poignant style; but it cannot be expected, that sheets should be allowed to fly about the Tuileries in which one Louis Florian Paul de Kergorlay states, as a motive for voting against the new constitution, "*je suis convaincu que le*

rétablissement de cette dynastie sur le trône est le seul moyen de rendre le bonheur aux Français."* I beg you will tell your friend Mr. Perry, that two hundred of these were distributed gratis a few days ago. This, as well as a *Memoire justificatif* of the Duke of Ragusa, in which Napoleon is treated with no sort of ceremony, may be a sufficient answer to the absurd and monstrous falsities of his brother journalists, by whom, however, I fear that a sufficient number of our worthy countrymen are led to action†. The journals, which are *overlooked*, do not controvert the right of the Emperor, nor can such opposition be expected or tolerated under any government in modern times, where the power of the pen is such, that *scribere est agere;* but the articles of foreign news, even the very proclamations of the allied sovereigns, and of Louis himself, which appear in them, shew that they partake in no way of their former character of servility and subjection. The Moniteur

* See Appendix—No. 42.

† The same person, a bold, and most probably an honest man, published afterwards a sheet on the decree of the 9th of March, relative to the efforts of the Bourbonists in France, in which the imperial government was treated without reserve as a cruel usurpation: for this Dentu the printer and publisher was arrested. I leave the lawyers to say what would have awaited him in England.

itself, which, though it has ceased to carry its official pre-eminence on the face of it, is still edited under the eye of the Duke of Bassano, admits a freedom of discussion and liberality in its extracts and translations, which our Courier and Times must find irreconcileable with their assertions of the renovated slavery of France. Here follows a second more decided proof of the power of public opinion.

The sketch of the new constitution appeared in the Moniteur of Sunday, April the 23d. It was said to be principally the work of Mr. Benjamin de Constant, a name invariably joined with the Lanjuinais, the Raynouards, the Bedochs, the Flaugergues, the Durbachs, and all those who had distinguished themselves as the patrons of liberty, during the reign of eleven months—therefore was it expected that the utmost concession would be made to the people, and that the democratic spirit would prevail throughout every article. Those acquainted with the French character were not astonished to hear the pleasantries launched against this tenth trial of their modern Numas, even before its promulgation; but the friends of the Emperor wore an aspect of the most settled concern and alarm when they found the proposal, on its appearance, attacked on every side by serious as well as playful assailants. I never recollect, in my

life, to have experienced such a change in that which a man is apt to call public opinion, that is, the opinion of those amongst whom he lives and moves, and the voice of ephemeral publications, as took place at Paris at the appearance of the *Acte Additionnel aux Constitutions de l'Empire.* Both royalists and republicans, as well even as some of those who are supposed more attached to the Emperor, flew upon it at once. They began by the beginning—the very title was offensive.—The "Additional Act to "the Constitutions of the Empire," and the "Napoleon by the Grace of God and the Con- "stitutions Emperor of the French," showed, said they, that Napoleon considered the old system of despotism, the empire, as again in activity; that he skipped over the charter of Louis, the reign of Louis, and his own abdication, all which annulled these constitutions, as if they had never happened; and that he was Emperor by the grace of God and without any interval, after the fashion of the monarch whose nineteen years of reign he had himself so fairly derided.

The pure constitutionalists thought they saw, even in the renewal of these pretensions and forms, an annihilation of all their hopes that Napoleon was changed: they, as well as the royalists, exclaimed, that it would have been

better to take for the basis of the constitution that charter of Louis which the patriots themselves admitted to be, on the whole, an excellent guarantee for public freedom; that the said charter, although *octroyée*, was virtually accepted by the representatives of the people; and that it was unwise to have recourse to the scheme, so often tried, of sending a constitution for acceptation to the people, the greatest number of whose votes had notoriously been given to the worst possible and most despotic form of government—the imperial, and to the worst constitution—that of the year 8. They added, that to pretend the king had not reigned at all, and that none of his acts were to be considered as valid, was to destroy the principle of the sovereignty of the people, who had, for a certain time, eagerly admitted and virtually approved of his authority, even by the confession of Mr. Carnot himself.

The articles of the constitution were attacked in detail by a thousand pamphlets. Those to which the principal objection was made, were, the initiation of all the laws by the government, which was one of the faults of the royal charter, and the establishment of hereditary peers, which seemed a contradiction of the decree of the 10th of April, abolishing the nobility and feudal titles. This was accused as a recur-

rence to the principle of nobility, without any of the pretence and respect which such names as Montmorency, Grammont, and others associated with the glory of France, might be able to command. The wish to create this nobility was attributed to the personal vanity and egotism of the Emperor, who, not content with the plainer forms of democratic governments, wished to add to the pomp as well as the props of his throne: it was said to be a continuation of those monarchical institutions, the renewal of which had already been the ruin of the country. When Napoleon came to the throne, the French were an individual people, a republic, glorious partly by his victories, and consolidated by his ambition; the nobles were without honour, as they were without titles; no one thought of them or of their ancient dynasty: Napoleon's counts, and marshals, and court ceremonies, by awakening all the ancient prejudices in favour of birth and rank, revived their pretensions. I recollect being told at Vienna, by the keeper of the imperial library, that a valuable work on French genealogies in that collection was perpetually consulted and extracted from by Frenchmen, who on their own part, or on that of others, were anxious to establish claims to nobility, and to distinction in the new court of the

Tuileries. The revival of these ideas not only was the first source of disunion, but in a manner prepared the way for that return of the Bourbons and the nobles, which a preservation even of the forms of republicanism for twenty years from the period of the revolution would have rendered almost impossible. There are now in France the old nobles, who emigrated and returned with the king—the nobles who reconciled themselves to the imperial government—the military and other revolutionary nobles of the imperial court—and also the nobles of the last chamber of peers; to these are to be added the nobles of the chamber of peers established by the present constitution, who are to be hereditary. This gives a shock to the hopes of that equality which the return of Napoleon was expected to fix for ever in France. It is in vain that the model of England is proposed as an excuse for this institution. The privileges of the British peerage were no consequence of a formal pact proposed and agreed upon by the British people, but were the fruits of the courageous cupidity and revolt of the ancient feudatories of the Norman kings; and, during the only time when the government was in the hands of the people, were annulled. The objectors go the length of saying, that the present patriots of England consider an heredi-

tary legislator no less ridiculous than an hereditary poet or painter; and that the house of lords amongst us is notorious for its base servility to the ministers of the day, and had long ceased, in its united capacity, to command the least esteem. In short, the peers were and are considered another proof that Napoleon will hardly consent to be the head of a free constitutional monarchy suitable to the age immediately subsequent to that which witnessed the revolution. I am far from saying, that the framers of the constitution, or Napoleon himself, had any other design in view than the establishment of a free government; I am only recording opinions. A French colonel, who attended the Emperor at Fontainbleau during the days of his abdication, informed me, that he was standing by the side of Napoleon, on the parade, when M. de Caulaincourt brought him the first news of his deposition. The event was communicated in a whisper. Napoleon drew back a step, bit his lip, and a faint flush passed across his cheek; but he recovered himself instantaneously, and continued the review. For the first twenty-four hours subsequent to his fall he was a little unquiet; but afterwards was restored to his usual spirits and manners. It was a melancholy scene; the long corridors, the saloons of that vast palace, even the anti-chamber of Na-

poleon, were crowded with officers and soldiers, sauntering carelessly from room to room, without subordination, but without disturbance; for not only all order was lost, but all spirit even for commotion had subsided. Each morning as they rose, some marshal, general, or minister, on being asked for by the Emperor, was found to have dropped off to Paris*. Conversing one day with the colonel, he said, "It is not "the armies that have dethroned me, not the "combined sovereigns, not the extraordinary ef- "forts of England; but the progress of liberal "ideas, which if I had regarded four or five "years past, I should have confirmed my "power for ever. However," said he, gaily,

* Napoleon, when he put his name to the abdication, made two or three scratches and a dent with the stump of the pen, or back of a knife, on the little round claw-footed yellow table, on which it was signed. After his resignation of the empire, he spent his time, either in conversation in his apartment, or in a little English garden at the back of the palace, which he had himself laid out at considerable expense. In the midst of it there is a circular marble fountain, with a figure of Diana rising from the centre of the bath. On a stone bench beside it, and immediately opposite to a vista, at the end of which is a figure of Mercury on a pedestal, Napoleon, on one of these days of distress, was seated alone for three hours, and amused himself in kicking a hole, a foot deep, with his heel, in the gravel beneath. The keeper of the palace of Fontainbleau shewed me both the table and the fountain.

" I did not, and it is come to this." In the conversation to which I have before alluded, which he held with Mr. Sismondi, he said " that " he was the child of the revolution; that he owed " all his greatness to the emancipation of France " from its ancient servitude; that he knew and " was attached to the true principles of liberty; " *quoique je m'en suis écarté,*" added he; " but I " have seen my error, I have felt and suffered, " and I acknowledge the absolute necessity and " demand for freedom in this country." Mr. Sismondi had volunteered some articles, in defence of the constitution, of which the last appeared in the Moniteur of this day (the 8th), with a boldness which those only who are acquainted with the full force of a Parisian pleasantry can fully appreciate, and was in consequence invited to an audience with the Emperor, who kept him in conversation during a two hours' walk through the gardens of the Elysée. I have heard both Mr. S. and Mr. de Constant, who knows him well, say, that the quickness of his conception, the depth of his remarks, the facility and propriety of his eloquence; but, above all, the candour of his reply, and the patience of his silence, are more remarkable and attractive than they have ever met with in any other individual. Some very wise people amongst us may doubt of his sincerity; but those enlight-

ened men are convinced that he intends well to France, although they are not so sure that he is aware of the method necessary to be pursued in *constituting* the freedom of his subjects. M. Sismondi one day owned in my presence, that he feared that the Emperor had no conception of that unity and responsibility of ministers which would sink himself down to a pageant: that although he would be content to contract his authority, yet what power was left him he would choose to have solely in his own hands; that he would continue to consider his minister of foreign or of home affairs, of war, of the marine, of justice, of police, of the treasury, as each of them organs of his own administration, accountable to him alone; as his servants, unconnected with each other, and from the disunion of whom he might increase the fidelity and dependance of each upon himself. The *porte* would always travel with the imperial stirrup, and the French would think it the height of wisdom for him to transmit sealed orders to be signed by an unconsulted minister. The truth is, not Napoleon only, but the French, are at their elements in the work of constitutional government. M. de Constant's book on responsibility is reckoned a mine of newly discovered truths. Napoleon, nevertheless, many of the friends of liberty are persuaded, is willing to

become the constitutional monarch of France, as far as he has any conception of such a character, either because he will be really content with limited power, or because he sees that the French will submit to no other. Such, however, was the clamour against the constitution, so many and violent were the pamphlets, whose very titles proclaimed it to be incomplete, that the greatest alarm was apparent in the friends of the Emperor, who appeared to apprehend some immediate violence from the Jacobins. I had an opportunity of knowing that the grand marshal's family were in the greatest consternation, and that others of the court itself scrupled not to speak in terms of the utmost dejection. In one week after the promulgation of the constitution, on the 1st of May, appeared an imperial decree, which at once evinced that Napoleon had listened to the voice of the people. The decree spoke the language of truth. It confessed that the actual government was a *dictatorship (dont nous nous trouvions investis par les circonstances et par la confiance du peuple)*, to avoid the prolongation of which the forms proposed for framing the constitution had been abridged; that is to say, the constitution, instead of being originally formed by the representatives of the people, had been planned by the government. It was

owned that the intention had been to wait for the acceptation of the constitution by the people before the reunion of the electoral colleges for the choice of deputies; but that, overruled by circumstances, the best interests of the state had compelled the Emperor to surround himself with the national bodies. For this purpose the electoral colleges were to be called together in four days from the publication of the present decree, and the chamber of representatives was to be immediately chosen, so as to meet at the same time as the assembly of the Champ de Mai. Although in this convocation of the chamber nothing was decisively said respecting the remodelling of the constitution, it was implied, and universally acknowledged, that this would be the first work of the representatives of the people.* This was a decisive change in the original plan of the imperial government, which was declared in these words—

" *en convoquant les électeurs des colléges en assem-*
" *blée du Champ de Mai, nous comptions de consti-*
" *tuer chaque assemblée electorale de departement,*
" *en bureaux séparés, composer ensuite une com-*
" *mission commune à toutes, et dans l'espace de*
" *quelques mois arriver au grand objet de nos*

* Indeed afterwards Napoleon told them so in his speech, and they proceeded to it in their short sitting.

"*pensées.*" Under this plan, the representatives of the people, the parliament, in which the confidence of the nation was placed, would have been unassembled for several months, and the mere commission of the electoral colleges chosen at the Champ de Mai, an anomalous irregular body, would have been entrusted with the great work of legislating for the French nation of the present age, and for all posterity. The assembly of the Champ de Mai was never regarded with the eye of favour or confidence in Paris; it was objected to as a specimen of imperial *charlatanerie*, as a recurrence to those Charlemagnic institutions for which Napoleon, in despite of all inaptitude of time, and manner, and circumstance, had already discovered so frequent and decided a propensity, in preference to the forms and habits of the French monarchy. It was said to be a foolish insignificant fête, absurdly called national, when its sole purpose was to give splendour and a pretence to the return of Napoleon, and when the greater proportion of those assembled would probably be the armed satellites of his throne; since of the 80,000 electors in France, it was supposed not ten would attend the assembly. It was a subject of general exultation then, that the convocation of the chamber of representatives took away all the pretended im-

portance of the Champ de Mai, and left it no other character than that of a mere ceremony. Since the edict of the 1st of May, indeed, great doubts have been entertained whether this ceremony will take place at all, as the electors are to be assembled merely for the purpose of casting up and balancing the votes of their departments, and taking their seats in a range of benches to hear the anticipated acceptation of the constitution, proclaimed from the steps of the throne*. The calling together the new convention, for so it may be named, has made the acceptation of the additional act a matter of perfect indifference; as it is clear, from this measure, that Napoleon has yielded, and the people will at last have the formation of the constitution; so that at one notary's the act has been signed by only eight, at another by only two voters.

A third proof of the power of public opinion has been shewn in the general lenity of the new government to the known adherents of Louis, and that in contradiction of some early decrees. Napoleon, by a decree dated in the first week of the new reign, but not published in the Moniteur until afterwards, banished the persons composing

* It was even thought necessary to warn the world in the Moniteur, that the meeting of the deputies did not annul that of the Champ de Mai.

the king's household to thirty leagues from Paris. As a measure of security, supposing it to be such, this might be excusable; but it seems the ministers thought no danger could accrue from their residence in the capital, and represented the proceeding as arbitrary and impolitic. The Duke of Bassano even informed the Emperor that he should resign if it was carried into effect. The consequence of which representations, as well as the general clamour against the proscription, has been, that no one has been banished, nor even received any intimation from the police; on the contrary, overtures have been made to such of the household as choose to enrol themselves in the imperial armies, and a letter was shewn me the other day from the minister of war, addressed to a young nobleman who had desired to be put upon service, saying that the rank *he had required in the imperial guard* would be granted him. He made no such requisition, and I was thence convinced of the confidence and the necessities of the government. The moderation of the government, and the assurances which it is determined to give to the people that the imperial despotism will not be renewed, have been strikingly seen in the circular letter of Mr. Carnot, of this Tuesday, to the prefects, reproaching them with the viola-

tion of correspondence, and denouncing legal penalties against all such as presume to open or detain post letters under the pretence of public service. This liberality on the part of the Emperor, or of his ministers, will, I doubt not, and must in reason, be regulated by the measures of the foreign sovereigns, and the conduct which their abettors in the Bourbon interest will choose consequently to pursue. The fixed opposition and continued aggression of the allies will naturally strengthen the hands of Napoleon, and will make even the most attached friends of freedom inclined to trust him with a power necessary perhaps for the salvation of France. If any thing should prevent a war, the individual independence of Frenchmen is secure.

LETTER XI.

Paris, May 19.

THE state of the country has reduced the government to the necessity of reminding the partizans of the Bourbons, that no sovereign can suffer a direct attack upon his authority; and that, whilst Napoleon is on the throne of France, all efforts in favour of the fallen dynasty are a national offence, which will be punished by the laws already provided against treason. The decree of the 10th of this month, upon the report of the minister of police, can be viewed in no other light; and I am astonished, that even our liberal friends in England seem to regard the measure as arbitrary and unjust. If Napoleon is to reign, overt acts to dethrone him must be repressed, and repressed in the manner justified by the immemorial usage of all actual sovereigns. It is acknowledged, that the determination of the allies to attempt to dethrone Napoleon has put into action that minority of France which has the same object; and those demonstrations of discontent, which, in happier times, the government might be able

to despise, must naturally now be quelled; and the reminding the revolters, that the laws against their efforts are still in existence, and will be put into vigour, is rather an act of mercy than of rigour—it is affording a chance for reform, and a delay of punishment. The approaching meeting of the chamber of representatives will prevent the exercise of any illegal power, or the infliction of any unjust penalties. It is very well for Mr. Kergorlay to call the decree of the 10th the renewal of terrorism, because a decided Bourbonist must take every step to render the imperial government odious, if he cannot persuade it to be imbecil; but an impartial person cannot think it unjustifiable, that something should be done against the seditious, any more than that an army is sent into La Vendée, and that the royalists should not be suffered to march to Paris, and cut the throats of every one who wears the tricoloured cockade. I know not that Napoleon is equally justified, in commanding by a decree published yesterday, that the royal volunteers shall complete the offers of horses and money, which they made to the king, for the Emperor's service, and shall present themselves before certain generals immediately, in order to join the imperial armies, or be sent to a depôt. The Emperor has certainly a right to be apprised that the royal volunteers are not

actively employed against his government: he has a right to their acquiescence, but not to their service; and, previously to his leaving Paris, he may fairly remove from the capital such as are known to entertain any design hostile to the state. They are in the predicament, perhaps, of all the other portions of the army, and may therefore be disposed of by an order from the minister of war. The decree, however, has been ill received at Paris, in which, at the same time, it has, to my knowledge, not in all instances been carried into effect, any more than that relative to the king's household. M. de L— remains here still. The royal volunteers are only called upon in the south, where there are insurrections; and it seems that the decree was published on the 19th of April, although it appears now for the first time at Paris. I see in the English papers accounts of numerous arrests and violences at Paris —all false, as usual; and resorted to in order to reconcile the people to a war against Napoleon, as if he were the great enemy of freedom, and our enlightened, candid, liberal, accomplished, patriotic ministers, the only patrons of national and individual independence. These gentlemen know nothing of France, if they think there is a chance of the imperial despotism being renewed in any other way, than by the

decided success of the French arms in the ensuing contest, when gratitude may perhaps do the work of fear. There is, however, even in the army, such a spirit of independence, and so weary are the superior officers of the perpetual labours of the last war, so anxious all the new men to assure what they have obtained, that no one here thinks, that under any supposition, Napoleon would be able to persuade either his troops or France to carry a war beyond the Rhine; nor that the Emperor would find support in his capital or the provinces, if he provoked a contest for the recovery even of Belgium, or if he did not make every effort to remain at peace. It is his moderation, that is to say, the repeated offers that he has made to the allies to maintain the treaty of Paris, that has rallied the pride and self-love of France round his person, and has put the question between this country and the combined sovereigns into the simple form of a foreign interference in the choice which she is to make of a sovereign. It is so much the interest of France to remain at peace; and by the common consent and confession even of our statesmen, who visited Paris last year, it is so much her wish, that the apprehension of aggression on her part can only be the pretext, not the real cause of war. It is not because

Napoleon dare not quit Paris, as our ridiculous journalists in England affirm, that he does not march upon Brussels; it is because he is determined not to begin the war until the conviction, that there is no other alternative, has persuaded the whole of his subjects to join him in one great effort to maintain his cause and their own. In proportion as the chance of peace seems to diminish, the union of all parties appears more probable—even the liberal royalists say "we must fight first, and talk afterwards—"since you gentlemen, the English, will have it "so." The constitutionalists, in the first days of the return of Napoleon, were considered as a separate body from the Imperialists, and particularly at the time of the discontents consequent upon the publication of the constitution, when some reports tended to create a belief, that England was willing to remain at peace. Rumours were then spread that a sacrifice would be made to the apprehensions of all Europe, and that a change of government would take place, in which Carnot or Fouché would be appointed president of the republic, and Napoleon generalissimo of the forces—the same report was encouraged during the advance of the Emperor upon Paris, to reconcile the most powerful and the bravest portion of the citizens of the capital. A sentence in M. de Caulaincourt's memorial to the Emperor,

in which it was hinted, that the interference of foreigners might prevent the regulation of their internal affairs, created a suspicion, that a war would be commenced to excuse the necessity of giving a free constitution to France. But the continued determination of England to pursue this unjust object, and the frankness with which the Emperor has thrown himself into the arms of the people, has listened to their voice, and has identified their interests with his own, by the convocation of the chamber of representatives, has decided the part to be played by those whom we call the Jacobins—that is to say, four-fifths of the population of France, who are determined to stand the shock of nations, and to try the chances of liberty at least, in one great throw, in the person of Napoleon. Accordingly, although the cap of liberty is not hoisted, the eagle is held as its substitute—the imperial guard march to the Marseillaise; and it was remarked the other day to me at the Tuileries, that, for the first time since the early days of the republic, the troops passed in review to the tune of the once famous *ça ira*. Every engine is set to work—the theatre Montansier is now fitted up as a coffee-house—tables and chairs are placed in the pit, whilst the boxes and the lobbies are thrown into one—on the stage is a pedestal in the midst of a natural bower of green, upon

which is placed the laurel-crowned bust of the Emperor. The whole house is crowded every night to excess, although there is no other entertainment than volunteer songs chanted to the praise of Napoleon and liberty. I recollect that one of them ran upon the joke of last year, which assigned the name of Nicholas to the Emperor; the licence to remember which shows, that the Napoleon of 1815 is not the Napoleon of 1812. The songster mounts from the pit to the stage by a set of steps, on each side of which stands a *gendarme*, and sings from the stage. The entrance to the saloon is guarded by soldiers, who regulate the proportion between those who enter and those who quit the coffee-house; and this assistance of the military must not be attributed to any innovation made by Napoleon, but to the continuation of the old French system, under which the laws, unfortunately, having no force, the police and other servants of justice command no sort of respect, and were they to attempt to disperse a crowd, after the fashion of Townsend and Vickary, without the aid of bayonets, would be instantly beat to pieces in the struggle.

The songs at the Montansier are what we call of the most inflammatory nature; that is, they breathe an ardent spirit of liberty, and not only declare the right of France to be free,

but the wish that other nations may profit by her example.

Si les peuples du continent
Marchaient sur la patrie
La guerre, c'est mon sentiment,
Serait bientôt finie.
Nous voyant libres, ils diraient
Vivent les Francs ! la France !
Et *tout bas*, ils *ajouteraient*,
Pour nous *quelle espérance ?*

* * * * *

Princes du nord, dansons en rond
Et soyez tous tranquilles,
Ou vos soldats embrasseront
Nos phalanges mobiles.
Attaquez ; et la liberté
Ira de fibre en fibre !
Votre système réjeté
Le MONDE sera libre.

I do not require you to praise the poetry, but to remark the sentiments.

On Sunday last, May 14, a body of the workmen of St. Antoine and St. Marceau, representing a federation, which had two days before formed itself in those suburbs to the number of 30,000, marched before the Emperor at the Tuileries. The express purpose of this union is to form a body of sharp-shooters to fight in advance of the national guard, in case the enemy shall present itself before the capital. They demand

arms, with which they promise to guarantee Paris against the reappearance of the allies. The number of those who were ranged in order of battle at the court of the Tuileries, and passed Napoleon previously to his review of some regiments of the line and of the young guard, amounted to 12,000; they had demanded this presentation, but had made no preparation for appearing before their Emperor, the greater part being in their labouring dresses and in their dustman's hats: nevertheless, when drawn up and when marching, they fell so easily into their ranks, and proceeded in such order, that they might, in any other country, have been taken for old soldiers; indeed, many of them have served. This movement of the suburbs glances at the national guard of Paris, most of whom are reputed to be peaceably inclined, and to think more of the preservation of their shops than the glory or integrity of France. A pamphlet has appeared, stating the necessity of reorganizing this guard. The timorous begin to shrug up their shoulders; and I see that even the Journal de l'Empire says, that to their shouts of *Vive l'Empereur* were added others which recalled the too famous epochs of the revolution, and which they regretted to hear. For myself I caught nothing but *Vive la Liberté, Vive la Nation,*

although a friend of mine heard *à bas les Royalistes, à bas la Canaille.* On the 17th, a Parisian federation was formed upon the same principles as that of the suburbs, but no second presentation of these volunteers has taken place. It is asserted, that these federations did not originate with the friends of the court; and certain it is, that whether from fear of excess or other motives, no gratuitous distribution of arms has yet taken place, for such as demand them at the depôts pay 19 francs for each musquet. However, an organization of these volunteers who are to act as tirailleurs of the guard has been commenced, and officers of the line have been appointed to command them. The example of Paris has been followed in the departments—particularly in Burgundy and Brittany, where the federation is meant as a counterpoise to the royalism of a portion of the province.

In all the proclamations and addresses of these bodies, the names of *la patrie* and *la liberté* are made the rallying point, and always precede that of the Emperor, whose claims are put upon the footing of his being the *national hero.* The government is under some embarrassment in the regulation of its conduct respecting these movements, which it cannot wholly encourage, although the least suspicion that they

are looked upon with distrust would leave the Emperor no support but the sword of his guard. Accordingly, the utmost care has been taken to give a military form and organization to these voluntary levies, which have enabled the Emperor to create a protection for his own throne under all the denominations of armed force which can be employed in defence of public freedom, such as partizans, free corps, light battalions, volunteers, and moveable national guards. Nothing but the national spirit would enable the government to take such a measure as recalling all the soldiers disembodied by the king to their regiments, which they join with the utmost alacrity. Large detachments pass through Paris daily, shouting and singing the Marseillaise, and other patriotic songs. They are in plain clothes; but their sun-burnt faces and mustachios sufficiently mark their old occupation. The campaign will open, if delayed a month longer, with 300,000 regular troops, at the least; notwithstanding it is true that, as the Duke of Feltre told our ministers, the French army amounted at the king's flight only to 84,000. Eight armies or corps of observation were formed by the second of May: the army of the north, of the Mosselle, of the Rhine, of Jura, of the Alps, of the Var, of the Pyrenees, and of reserve at Paris and Laon. The efforts

will appear less extraordinary to those who recollect that, in 1793, there were 14 armies in the field—400 battalions out of the 500 of the *garde nationale mobile* are put in motion, and every preparation made for the organization of the levy in mass in Lorraine, Alsace, Franche Compté, Burgundy, Dauphiny, the Lyonnois, and Picardy. The enrolment of the moveable national guard is a measure which, unless the government had allied itself with the people, would be utterly impossible. In *communes* which furnished only eight to the conscription (Malmaison for instance), sixty have marched; and in a neighbouring commune, forty have gone instead of the former five. The prefect writes to the mayor for a list of all the inhabitants between twenty and forty years of age, and their designation, whether as bachelors, or married, with children, or without; and, on receiving the answer, orders in reply a certain portion out of each class, at the discretion of the magistrate, who makes and notifies the choice at once.

Three of the gardeners of the imperial chateau of Malmaison have marched at an hour's warning. No reluctance is manifested in the recruits; if there were any, these means of recruiting an army would be impracticable; or, to use a paradox, the measure is so arbitrary, that it can come only from the people. The Em-

peror is now the man of the people—the people are at the head of his ministry—the people compose his army—the cause is that of the people—and finally, it is against the people*, more than against Napoleon, that the allies are now in arms, especially our great statesman Lord Castlereagh, who I see has had the extreme candour to confess in his speech on the 7th of April, "that his object has long been to restore Europe to that ancient social system which her late convulsions had disjointed and overthrown." When he talks so plainly, even Lord Castlereagh can be understood; when he professes such principles, even Lord Castlereagh may be believed. We want not here the fiddle which made Hurlothrumbo intelligible. I see his lordship's meaning, and the beauty of it, as clearly as if the original tones had been drawled into my ear. The ancient social system of Europe!—Truly one has as great a respect for these words, either together or apart, as for the holy Roman Empire, though it should turn out to be neither ancient, nor social, nor a system. That state of things which his lordship would wish to restore, as it cannot refer to the political divisions of the continent, but to the relations between individuals, can be no other

* The programme of the late peace as they call it, owns this at last—the war was against Napoleon and the *revolutionary system.*

than the comparatively modern invention which immediately succeeded the feudal system, and according to which the whole mass of a nation is taught to look up to one individual as the source of honour, and power, and law, and government —whilst the dignities of the nobility are but the trappings of the monarch—whilst all legislation is reduced to the declaration of his will, and all justice dependant upon his decision. In fine, it can be no other than that absolute monarchy, repugnant to the institutions and national manners of the ancestors of the modern peoples of Christendom, which so many sovereigns, by mutually playing off the separate classes of their subjects against each other, had by degrees contrived to establish, but which the philosophical spirit of the last age had made such a progress to undermine, and will, in spite of the vast difficulties and hinderances occasioned by the internal and external excesses of republican and imperial France, succeed eventually to overthrow.

In every other country but England, in which the feudal system prevailed, the monarch has managed to gain by the dissensions of the nobles and the people; and it would, perhaps, have been our fate to profit as little by the fall of the barons as the French in the reign of

Louis XI. if our people, properly so called, had not, from the time of the conquest, regarded both their monarch and his nobles as foreigners, the importers of manners and laws contrary to their own free institutions, and as persons, therefore, against whom, without being seduced by the ties of consanguinity and natural attachment, they were to strive solely for their own advantage, and to obtain their end sometimes by assisting their monarch against his barons, sometimes the barons against their king. Thus it was that they themselves were the only gainers by the triumph or fall of either, and owed their increasing consequence as much to the success of Henry the Seventh as to the defeat of John. To diminish the power of the feudatories, the English kings emancipated their vassals and increased their privileges. They created, likewise, a preponderating power in the municipalities, whose immunities, as they contributed to the exertion, and consequently to the wealth, of the subject, added also to their own revenue. The necessities of the sovereign augmented the number and the rights of the citizens, who, feeling no gratitude for favours which they purchased, were not seduced by any emotions of loyalty to surrender to a reigning monarch the favours which had been granted by his ancestors; and as the desire of freedom had made the capital and the other great cities

affluent in money and in men, so their wealth gave them the ability to defend and confirm their independence. In this manner London became the metropolis of freedom, as well as of the commerce of the world. Liberty may be a mountain nymph; she may reside in the country; but she is born in towns, the sister of commerce and of trade, to which chiefly must be attributed the preservation of that individual independence in England, transmitted, as Lord Bolingbroke, in his Dissertation on Parties, says, from the unknown ages of our government, either from our early colonists, or perhaps the aborigines of our island. Had Lord Castlereagh lived and talked in the reign of Charles the Second, he would have been a strenuous advocate for the ancient social system of Henry the Eighth, and talked no less learnedly of the great convulsions of our civil war than he has referred to those of the French revolution, of which I consider that the great evil has been, that we are now setting in the current occasioned by its back-water, and that the excesses, and, as yet, the misfortunes with which it was accompanied, will furnish common-places and audiences for such as may wish to prepare us for the trammels of tyranny. Already, perhaps, are there some amongst us who contemplate the predicted euthanasia of the

British constitution as fast approaching—who already prepare to close her dying eyes, and compose her decent limbs. But, by the blessing of God, they may not all of them be in at the death! Those who hoped that the ancient social system had received from the French patriots of 1789 a shock which she would never recover, must, indeed, from that period, have raised their hopes, and renewed them only to lose them one after another, and to deplore the condition of humanity, by which the fairest and best of all good things seems fated to be the most unattainable. But a general persuasion of the benefits of freedom, and the rights of individuals, when once diffused through a whole nation, cannot, like the staining of glass, or any other insignificant art, be wholly lost, although it may fall into temporary discredit or oblivion. We have been long accustomed to declaim against the former tyranny of Napoleon, and with justice; but we forget that the circumstances of his elevation, as well as of the rise of those who contributed to the power and splendour of the imperial court, could not fail to be suggested to every Frenchman when he contemplated the usurper—and to confirm him in his notions of the power of individual exertion, and the original equality of man. We forget that these notions must necessarily outlive, or perhaps even be fatal to the

pretensions of Napoleon, and the same inattention or perverseness of vision may make even the liberal minded amongst us afraid that at this moment a spirit of turbulence and discontent and a love of change only have been productive of those efforts, which, without the sad experience of our own time, we might mistake for the effect of a genuine love of liberty. Whatever may be our apprehensions on this head, we cannot, however, suppose that, great as Lord Castlereagh's efforts and abilities are, it is feasible to restore the ancient social system of Europe, nor indeed, until his lordship owned so much, could we have guessed, that he, or any body else, would dare to avow that he was engaged in such a philanthropic project. The restoration of the ancient social system of Africa was, indeed, commenced under his auspices and the selling of black children by their mothers must have ameliorated the state of society on the Coast of Guinea. I say under his auspices—for be assured, and I have it from one of the plenipotentiaries who signed with his lordship, that little or no effort was *originally* made by the English ambassador to apply the abolition to France, and that a word from England, in the *first instance*, would have probably produced a very different result.

The transfer of a few millions of whites in

Saxony, Poland, Belgium, and Italy, from owner to owner, may serve also as a specimen of his wish to establish the property which legitimate sovereigns possess in full right and title in their subjects, for all the purposes of use and abuse, to be kept or exchanged, as convenient may be, according to the conditions imposed by interest or force. His conduct at the congress of Vienna was one constant infraction of the pledge which the treaty of Chaumont gave to the world in March, 1814, for the future intentions of the allied sovereigns, which were said to be a general peace, under the protection of which the rights and liberties of all nations might be established and secured.

How the rights and liberties of the Poles, the Saxons, the Belgians, how those of the Genoese have been established and secured, and what seeds of a general lasting peace were sown by the transactions of congress, the world has at last an opportunity of judging. The tongue whose early eloquence avenged the insulted patriots of Gaul has already arraigned "those principles of partition and plunder, the "prime source of all the calamities of Europe, "which, originating with the spoilers of Po-"land, and copied on a gigantic scale by the "leaders of France, have now returned to their

" first seat, without changing their nature or " abating their malignity."

The ministerial mannikins had not fitted their strings; the prompter not breathing, the puppets could not squeak; Lord Castlereagh was not present to answer to the charge of violating the honour of England and consummating the ruin of an ancient republic. Genoa had been lost and forgotten a whole month; his treachery to her in December had been erased from his memory whilst putting the finishing hand, in January, to the greater master stroke of injustice. To that state we broke a solemn promise—to the other powers, who looked up to us as the natural patrons of national independence, we only appeared as the abettors and the dupes of despotism. The moral character of England, by her constant opposition to the aggressions of Napoleon, and the circumstance of her efforts being turned solely to that object, had been placed very high in the estimation of all Europe, and up to the peace of Paris had given a presumptive superiority to every individual of our country, and had even made our diplomatists originally respectable. She had stood the storm, wrapped in her virtues and a warm surtout, but when the sun of success caused a developement of her policy, the admirers of our honest, generous,

free disposition, saw, that if there was one real republic in the world she was to be at war with England; that when Norway wished to be independent she was to be starved into obedience by England; if the Genoese had indulged any absurd notions of being again free, they were to be delivered over to the king of Sardinia by the troops of England; if the Belgians showed any aversion to their Dutch chains, they were to be riveted by the hands of England; if the Poles wanted advocates, they found their slavery perpetuated by the pre-engagements of England; if Saxony submitted with reluctance, her masters and gaolers wore the clothes and carried the bayonets of England; if the inquisition was to be re-established in Spain and monkery at Rome, it was said to be under the auspices of England. Seeing, I say, all these things, and finding that when all the interests, and rights, and feelings of humanity were sported with and sacrificed, there was no opposition from England, but that, on the contrary, the wishes of the principal powers of Europe, that is to say, the cupidity of certain royal and imperial houses, was made and avowed to be the rule of her conduct, her admirers began to be strangely surprised, to lose much of their respect for her former conduct, and nearly all their con-

fidence in her future promises. No one could be astonished that Russia, Prussia, or Austria, should have such wishes; but that they should be backed by England,—that the implied absolute subjection of so many people, that the prescriptive right of an assembly of crowned heads, or their representatives, to consult nothing but *the wishes of the principal powers* in the confirmation or the change of the masters of the whole European population, should be countersigned by four Englishmen, was a legitimate object of wonder and horror to such as looked for the security of national freedom in that influence which the glory of England might give her a power to command, and her generous policy an inclination to employ. To former admiration, then, has succeeded a distrust of the professions of the English government; and such as think the case desperate, and that in the cause between peoples and kings England has chosen her party, only quote the eulogy made by Lord Castlereagh *on the ancient social system of Europe* as proof of their suspicions and as a justification of their invectives. Thus the friends of freedom in France do not hesitate to affirm that we have connived at the subjection of the continent upon a principle of interest; and I am ashamed to find in a writer who notices the

above simple confession of our secretary, the following words—" *enfin la Grande Bretagne, qui* " *est libre, a un intérêt immense à ce qu'elle ne soit* " *point changée*" (meaning the forms of absolute monarchy in Europe); " *parce qu'elle retient les* " *peuples du continent dans un état de faiblesse* " *et de misère qui les place tous dans sa dépend-* " *ance, et les rend nécessairement tributaires de* " *son industrie.*" This opinion is found in the same volume with those attacks on Napoleon which procured the temporary seizure of the Censor, and has many partisans in Paris, not so much amongst the friends of the government as the constitutionalists. To say the truth, as yet there has appeared nothing of an official character which must not rather flatter both the English government and people than be the cause of offence. The common talk of those belonging to the court consists of ardent prayers for peace with our country, and when the constitution is the topic, either in speaking or writing, the assimilation of it to that of Great Britain seems to be the general wish of the ruling party. We may acquit Lord Castlereagh of the depth ascribed to such a Machiavellian policy, at the same time that we must confess that the conduct of the British cabinet, at the commencement of the French revolution, and from the

moment of the fall of Napoleon, might justify the above suspicions. At both of these epochs England appears the arbitress of Europe—to her have all eyes been directed—the cause of kings and peoples were, and are now, alike in her hand—her fiat can now enforce, as it would before have confirmed, the independence and happiness of the fairest portion of the civilized world. Morocco itself could not have done more against liberty than England in acceding to the conspiracy of Pilnitz; and there are some who think that our war against the spirit of jacobinism was crowned with complete success. If so, why do we go to war now? Is our victory over this bruised serpent null and void? Have we been mistaken? Has Pitt not weathered the storm?—and is Perceval no more a martyr? Is Lord Castlereagh only a lucky man? Have the efforts of these heaven-born ministers advanced us not one step in our expedition against the infidels, and is another crusade to be preached? The conclusion of the Censeur seems almost inevitable, and I should subscribe to it, did I not think that the interest of Great Britain makes no part of the consideration of our statesmen, and that a war on our part will be merely the consequence of the self-love of Lord Castlereagh being staked to the maintenance of a certain system, and to

the making good those bargains driven with the sovereigns of congress, which the appearance of one individual upon the shore of Cannes, concurring with the indignation of insulted peoples, now threatens to stultify and annul. That this certain system is what he has himself avowed, and what his conduct so well declares, we need not doubt; but, detestable and ridiculous as it may appear to you and me, let us be candid, and own that, were it any other, he would be no less pertinacious in its prosecution. It is not *what he has said*, but *that he has said*, which causes his concern; although, perhaps, there are some reasons why a project of

"Undoing all, as all had ne'er been done"—

of retarding, or rather causing to retrograde the progress of civilization—may have stronger claims to his peculiar attention, than any indifferent or praiseworthy design could possibly command. For, first, vicious schemes like rickety children requiring more care than a healthy offspring, his parental honour may be at first piqued, and at last his affections engaged to bring them to maturity: secondly, the said system is secure of a continuation of support, were it but out of hatred to the opposite principle, for which his lordship must feel something very like the rancour of a renegade, notwithstanding the momentary inclination to the

Londonderry Catholics which made the treasury tremble to its inmost rows, and extorted from the pious ——— the scriptural regret, that the secretary should have returned like a dog to his vomit. We have seen so many of our politicians, who commenced their career as friends of liberty, afterwards pass over on the other side, upon the pretence that she has fallen amongst thieves, deserting her for that which would have claimed the protection of the good Samaritan, that we must suppose, either that there is an impracticability in republican principles, which, being undiscovered in the eagerness of youth, cannot be concealed from the reflection of age and experience; or that from the acquiescence of increasing laziness, or the baser motives of cupidity, those generous feelings that prompt the youthful generation towards the diffusion of benefits on which their ardent imaginations set so high a price, gradually expire, and are at last totally extinguished in the bosom of age.

Those who have lived much with public men must know some few whose desertion of their early principles they are happy to account for upon the first presumption; but as the far greater portion of these people have all the characteristics, and have for the most part received the price of apostacy, I must attribute

their neglect of their cause, not to any thing vicious or untenable in that cause, but to some flaws or faults in themselves; in other words, not to their justifiable prudence and conviction of former mistakes, but to the increasing power which the baser passions acquire with progressive years. For this reason it has no sort of influence with me to hear the common-place, that all ministers have commenced patriots, and that there must be something intrinsically bad or unproducible in that cause, which such great and virtuous men as Pitt and Huskisson, Canning and Castlereagh, discontinued to support. Even the great alarmist, who, were he alive, methinks would blush to hear his name proverbially coupled with the most disgraceful of the meaner passions, has no weight with me, any more than the herd of his disciples whose tremours are lost in the gigantic shadows that obscured their understanding, and caused their fear. I do not hesitate an instant between the Mr. Burke of 1775, and the Mr. Burke of 1795; between the friend of America, and the enemy of France; between the patriot and the pensioner; between the politician of forty and of sixty; between the author of the address to the king and of the letter to Lord Auckland. The delight and pride attached to the reflection that I belong to a country which formed and che-

rished such a genius, cannot so far prevail upon me as to make me suspect the integrity of the principles, in support of which that genius was first displayed.

If liberty, and independence, and patriotism, ceased in his latter days to flow from him with their former flavour, I attribute the sourness of the liquor to the insincerity of the cask—the grape is still the same. Mr. Burke might be mistaken—shall I say so much?—*he might be dishonest.* Those who knew him may judge whether this melancholy method of accounting for the change in his political opinions, as it is more simple, is not also more just, than the supposition of any actually well founded discovery having been made by that great man of the futility and pernicious tendency of all attempts to improve the condition of the subject at the expense of the authority of the sovereign; and of the jealousy with which the wise and good should consequently regard any innovation in the ancient social system of the continental nations. Unfortunate, however, as was this change of character in the politicians of the last age, it is neither so disreputable in the individuals, nor so fatal a prognostic for the nation, as the tendency discernible in the rising generation to take at once the dirty road to fame, and to adopt those principles of pretended

prudence which so happily unite national and individual interest. The parliamentary boy now adopts in his noviciate those solid, certain maxims, and takes that prudent line, which it formerly required some previous experience of the vanity of virtue to admire. He makes that discovery at the outset of his days with which Brutus terminated his career. The applause of his countrymen, the admiration or the gratitude of all Europe, he finds have been bestowed upon some who were unworthy of them; *therefore* they are *always* mis-applied; *therefore* he will despise them—he will contract his circle of admirers from all human kind to the judicious few whose judgment to discern is not less notorious than their power to reward. He will begin to stifle any deluding emotions of ambition, any love of popularity, which all example teaches him he must sooner or later disregard, and put himself at once in the line of promotion. If he has any talent, he will employ it directly on the right side, and slide at the onset into place, without the ceremony of going backwards and jumping in with a run from the opposite benches. Is he the representative of a great family? he shall begin by moving an address—but this is not a paid place; the Admiralty and £1200 shall slake his first thirst for honourable distinction. Is he the Julus

of a wealthy workman, or an Indian director, the wonder of his collegiate club,—distinguished above the ordinary sons of declamation?—his first speech is favourably heard—he is declared an useful, promising man—his friends think him in a good way—he tries his hand again, and a message acquaints him that he is an under-secretary, or, if the treasury is open, a lord—his fortune is made—his family are satisfied that his education has not been in vain—he must rise, and perhaps may make his tutor a bishop, and his father a peer.

It must be confessed there is no want of attention to these early proficients. I find that little difficulty is made of displacing an old sinner to encourage profligacy in that portion of the age whose opposition would be most formidable. The youths of education and condition, who are not favoured with the first start, are content to take the next best badge of servitude, and to fill the many mansions of Downing-street. Look at the honourable list of clerks in our public offices, where many men of no contemptible rank may recognise their children or collaterals, doing very well at an alleged salary of £120 per annum; although, were a spark of English honour alive in their bosoms, they would rather send them to engross in the highest garrets of Temple Lane, in

which case the youths themselves would be snatched from ignominy, and St. James's air would no longer be infected with the official fops of five o'clock. The quills of the treasury and the other public buildings must be driven as well as those of Lothbury; and the labourer at that employ may be as honest and as worthy of his hire, though, at the first presumption, hardly so respectable as the other. But that the gentlemen of England should think themselves too fortunate in seeing their sons or brothers saved from the duties and independence of a learned profession or of honourable commerce, by becoming the journeymen pen-cutters and bell-ringers of a rascal-statesman, and that they should consider such a line as the best qualification for and introduction to the distinction of their fellow-citizens, denotes a degradation of the honourable feelings in our aristocracy (by this I mean the well-educated portion of our countrymen), and a loss of that proper individual pride which may be dispensed with in an absolute monarchy, but without which, notwithstanding the liberality and excellence of its institutions, a nation must soon cease to be free. To my mind, a young man should be ashamed to commence his service to his country, which common decency obliges him after all to make the pretext of his practices, by putting his name upon the list of her pensioners, and

to anticipate at once, rather than to earn the pay of patriotism. Much of this early degeneracy is to be attributed to the increase of taxation, which makes it difficult for any one to hold his place in society who is not in possession of great real income, (not the nominal revenue of a large rent-roll,) unless a portion of that taxation is in some way refunded into his own pocket. The heads of the most considerable families are forced to provide for their connections by those means which were originally their own; and which, having passed through the channels of government, return, diminished in value but increased in power, to their own hands: for the necessary effect of this circuitous route and transfer must be to transform the gentry, the fathers and the sons, of these kingdoms, from honest independent characters into the degraded tools of the ruling parliamentary faction.

It is not to be expected that the young should resist the parental kindness, which, after having brought them up with the pretensions usual to their rank, presents them with the choice of immediate provision, and a place in the circle, and of indigence and exclusion. Thus whatever political virtue we are to see in this age, will, for the most part, be found in the heirs to commercial property, whose

connections being provided for at the counter instead of at court, have no demands for their roguery, and who can themselves afford to be honest. There are, however, but few of those hardy spirits who would be willing to see their best years spent in want, or, what is more painful still, in inactivity, rather than do violence to all the generous principles which a good education can hardly fail to infuse into the well-born mind, by taking the only dishonourable position to be found in a free country, à place amongst the slaves and satellites of state. Circumstances may render it excusable for a young man of family or talent to lend a virtuous statesman the support of his name or service, by associating it to the list of his ministry; but he should by no means consider such an early introduction into office as desirable, or in any way the object of youthful ambition. On the contrary, a person of any spirit would take a pride in doing his duty, without any conditions which should oblige him to receive a recompense; he would take a pride in being known as one determined to be a statesman, if possible, without being a placeman; and, until such a pride is prevalent, little patriotism is to be expected from either side of the Speaker's chair. No ministry would dare to insult the Marquis of Tavistock by asking him

to become a Lord of the Treasury; and the parity supposed amongst the representatives of the nation renders it no unbecoming haughtiness for any member of parliament to receive such an offer, at least, with reluctance, and to consider the expediency, if an expediency exists, of acceding to it, as an objection rather than an inducement to the adoption of ministerial politics. But the encouragement of such antiquated notions, the classification of the Viscount —— and the Lord —— and the Honourable —— with the yagers and porters that fill the functions or the rolls of court appointments, and the contempt of official grandeur, are inconsistent with the *ancient social system*, and with the existence of the Castlereaghs of the day. They must live, say you. Recollect, I pray, the Duke of Choiseul's reply to the same apology.

LETTER XII.

Paris, May 24.

The French papers have arrived doubtless in London with their usual regularity; but I send you, nevertheless, a view of the occurrences, chiefly as they relate to the acts of government, since the return of the Emperor. In preparing this detail, I consult the public documents before me, as well as employ my own recollection of such transactions as passed, as it were, under my own eyes.

The Moniteur of the 20th of March contained the proclamation of Louis taking leave of his capital, not because he could not dispute the entrance of the rebels, but because he would not spill the blood of his subjects. "Divine Pro-
"vidence, which recalled us to the throne of our
"fathers, now permits that this throne should
"be shaken by the defection of a part of the
"armed force which had sworn to defend it.
"We might profit by the faithful and patriotic
"dispositions of the immense majority of the
"inhabitants of Paris, and dispute the entrance
"of the rebels; but we shudder at the calami-

" ties of every kind which a battle within the " walls would draw down on the inhabitants."

All Paris knew his majesty could not have disputed the entrance of the army of Napoleon —and all Paris has now an opportunity of judging how sparing this prince must be of the blood of his subjects.

Has not his most Christian majesty acceded to the treaty of the 25th of March, by which one million one hundred thousand bayonets are to break in upon France? What is his confidential servant Laroche Jacquelin doing in La Vendée? Has his conduct differed from that of any other monarch that ever pretended to a crown, and does he not think all means for its recovery justifiable by every law human and divine?

The king left the Tuileries at one o'clock in the morning: at two General Excelmans hoisted the tricoloured flag on the dome of that palace—the windows, gates, and colonnades, which had been occupied by national guards the three preceding days, were cleared; and the gardens, which had presented a confused crowd of anxious expectants silent and dejected, now were filled with groups of people, soldiers and others, of all ranks and classes, eagerly embracing each other, laughing, shaking hands, and exchanging congratulations.

During the day, the Moniteur went over to

other falsifiers you may say; but whatever inclinations you may choose to suppose in M. de Bassano, I defy you to show two such egregious attempts at imposition as are noticed above in the king's proclamation. On the 21st, the next day, the first line in that journal ran thus: "*Le roi et les princes sont partis dans la nuit.*" It continued, "*S. M. l'Empereur est arrivé ce soir à 8 heures dans son palais des Tuileries. Il est entré à Paris à la tête des mêmes troupes qu'on avait fait sortir ce matin pour s'opposer a son passage. L'armée qui s'etait formée depuis son debarquement n'avait pas pu depasser Fontainbleau. S. M. à passé sur sa route la revue de plusieurs corps de troupes. Elle a marchée constamment au milieu d'une immense population qui partout se portait au devant d'elle. La brave batallion de la vieille garde, qui a accompagné l'Empereur depuis l'île d'Elbe, arrivera ici demain et aura fait ainsi en 21 jours le trajet du golfe de Juan à Paris— Nous donnerons demain le recit de ce qui s'est passé sur la route de S. M. depuis son debarquement jusqu'à son arrivée à Paris.*"

On the same day appeared the appointments of H. S. H. the prince archchancellor to the great seal; the nomination of the Duke of Gaëta to the finance department; the Duke of Bassano to the secretariship of state; the

Duke Decrès to the marine and the colonies; the Duke of Otranto to the police; Count Mollien to the treasury; Marshal Prince of Eckmulh to the war department; the Duke of Rovigo to the inspection of *gendarmerie;* Count Bondy to the department of the Seine; and Real, counsellor of state, to the prefecture of police.

The same Moniteur contained the proclamations of Napoleon, dated March 1, Gulf of Juan, to the army and to the French people*; the address of the Elbese battalion of the guard to the army; the addresses of Napoleon to the inhabitants of the Higher and Lower Alps; to those of the Isère; to those of the town of Grenoble, with the answer of its inhabitants; and two addresses, one from the Mayor of Lyons, and another from the 11th regiment of the line. The proclamation to the French people had been brought to Paris by an Englishman travelling from Lyons, who continued showing it to several friends, until a more prudent acquaintance advised him to put it for the present in his pocket.

Besides these proclamations, appeared nine imperial decrees dated from Lyons, March 13. In every instance, the title given to himself by Napoleon, was "*Napoleon, by the grace of God,*

* See Appendix.

"*and the constitutions of the empire, Emperor* "*of the French, &c. &c. &c.*" The etcæteras have since been dropped. By these decrees, all changes in the judicial tribunals, since the abdication of Fontainbleau, were annulled; all emigrant officers were broken; the white cockade, the decoration of the lilies, the orders of St. Louis, of the Holy Ghost, and of St. Michael, were abolished; the national cockade and tricoloured standard were to be re-established, and the latter replaced in the town-houses and on the village churches; the imperial guard was restored to all its honours and functions; the 100 Swiss, and other Swiss guards, were banished forty leagues from Paris and all the imperial palaces; the king's household troops abolished, and their horses and equipments put in the disposal of the state.

The Bourbon property was sequestrated; the national property restored in every case; the nobility abolished, and the laws of the constituent assembly put in vigour against them. Feudal titles were abolished; but the titles of those who had attained national distinctions preserved, as also a reservation for giving titles to those whose ancestors had illustrated the French name in any age or profession, or art or science. The emigrants not included in former pardons were ordered to quit the French territory in fifteen days; and if convicted of wilful

entry, or remaining behind after that period, to be tried by the tribunals—their property to be sequestrated. All changes made in the legion of honour were annulled, and that order restored to its ancient footing, an exception being made in favour of those members whom, although appointed by the Bourbons, the Emperor might choose to continue on the list. The peers were dissolved: the chamber of deputies was dissolved; and all members arrived at Paris since the 7th of March ordered to return to their homes. The electoral colleges of the empire were convoked for the following May, to meet at Paris, in *an assembly extraordinary of the Champ de Mai*, to take measures for correcting and modifying the constitutions, according to the will of the nation; and, at *the same time, to assist at the coronation of the Empress and the son of the Emperor.*

The remainder of this important Moniteur contained an account of the transactions at Lyons and Grenoble, and the order of the day addressed by Marshal Ney to his troops.

It is observable, that in these documents the Emperor speaks every where of the government of the Bourbons as having been illegal, and to be considered as not having existed—a great fault, as the constitutionalists have not failed to remark, since a virtual acceptation of the

ancient dynasty cannot be denied to have been given by the French people to their king; and as the contrary supposition would make it appear that they had engaged themselves so entirely to Napoleon, that, notwithstanding his abdication, of which he made no mention, and the arrival of the Bourbons, they ought not to think they had in fact, or might ever have, any other sovereign than Napoleon. But, at the same time, it must be owned, that the Emperor gave a reason for thus bastardizing the claims of the Bourbons, which no less flattered, than his other proceeding might alarm, the people; namely, that these rights had no lawful foundation, because not arising from their will, and that his own pretensions had no other basis or pretext. At Lyons he held the language of moderation. "We should forget," said he, "that we have been the masters of nations— "my rights are those of the people alone—of "all that individuals have done, written, or "said, since the taking of Paris, I shall for "ever remain ignorant." The supposition, that what had been *written* or *said* might be the object of research and punishment, may surprise us, and show what was the rigour of the ancient imperial government; but it is no less fair to remark, that Napoleon has religiously kept his word, and that no prosecution or per-

secution has taken place of any single individual for acts, writings, or sayings, previously to his return, with the exception only of Marshal Augereau, who has been excluded from this grace, but who has been punished for saying, in his base proclamation to his soldiers in 1814, that Napoleon "was a coward who did not dare to die like a soldier," only by being unemployed and sent to his country seat. Orders were given for the arrest of Brulart, who attempted to assassinate Napoleon in Elba; and M. de Vitrolles was detained for his conduct in the insurrection of the south.

On the 22d of March M. Carnot was declared a count of the empire for his defence of Antwerp, and was also named, by another decree, minister of the interior. The national guards enrolled on the 9th of the month, and the volunteers, were decreed inactive, as also were the general councils of the departments organized by the late government on the 11th of March.

The appointment of M. Carnot, as well as of M. Fouché, was direct evidence of the party into whose hands the Emperor had determined to throw himself; for though these two gentlemen are considered of very different inclinations, the one being attached to the principles, and the other only to the results, of the revolution, yet they are equally a protection

against any renovation of the imperial despotism. The former minister, perhaps, may be considered a republican, who thinks no preliminary step so likely to accomplish his great object as the perpetual exclusion of an ancient incorrigible dynasty, and who for this purpose has not hesitated to devote himself to the service of the Emperor entirely and without reserve—a conduct for which if his propensities cannot altogether account, the circumstances of the case may. M. Carnot is believed to have survived that acuteness and penetration which have given his name so deserved a celebrity; and his firmness and courage, which still remain, having lost those guides, are by those who do not esteem him not unfrequently degraded into obstinacy and rashness. His Memoir to Louis the Eighteenth must surely be considered a very inferior performance, and as much might be guessed by the extraordinary pains taken to disperse it; as, amongst other contrivances, it is now vagrant through the streets in such tilted carts as are used in London by the perambulatory agents of lottery contractors.

The Duke of Otranto, from whom more compliance might be expected, as his principles have a greater tendency towards monarchical establishments, is nevertheless suspected to be much less a Napoleonist than his brother

minister; and being regarded as such, is considered as so much the more certain a guarantee of the moderate popular policy which the Emperor resolves to pursue.

He is decidedly the *best head*, so they say, in France; and at this moment is in possession, unaccountable as it may seem, of the confidence of all parties, if perhaps we except the very decided imperialists attached to the person of Napoleon. Of all the ministers appointed by Napoleon, I hear of only one who is not respectable for some quality; and with that exception, their appointment is such as would do credit to any court in Europe. Recollect always, that I am talking of the Carnots and Fouchés of 1815, not of those persons as they appeared in 1794. The Prince of Eckmulh is looked upon in England as a monster, for the extremities to which he reduced Hamburgh; but those extremities were necessary for the defence of the town intrusted to his care, and, severe as they were, have not left the marshal without admirers, even in that devoted city, where his exact discipline and his disinterestedness were topics of praise, whilst the suburbs were by his orders destroyed. The marshal refused the purse presented as usual to the military governor of the city. Ask your friend Mr. P———h if his example

was followed by the general known in England by the name of the gallant Tettenborn.

The Duke of Vicenza has since been named to the department of foreign affairs, being at the same time grand master of the horse. He is an exceedingly popular person, and contributes very much, as well as Count Mollien, to the respectability of the present ministry. To hear such *animalculæ* as Blacas and others, through the channel of our pitiful newspapers, call these gentlemen the rebel government, and exhaust every epithet of abuse upon men against whom no other charge can be brought than that they have placed themselves in the post of honourable peril, must move the spleen both of English and French, of whatever party, who retain any sentiments of generosity and candour. The Moniteur of the 25th announced that this journal contained no longer any official articles but such as were public acts of state. This loss of authority was to acquire increase of credibility.—It was to be less official and more authentic. It is still the government journal, and in the hands of the Duke of Bassano. An imperial decree of the 24th abolished the censorship and the *general direction* of the publishers and printers. The most unrestrained liberty, it may be said, licence, has ensued. Several de-

crees of the same date restored the ancient order and forms in the civil and military establishments. Immediate measures were taken to secure all the departments. The minister of the interior on the 22d wrote a circular letter to the prefects*, notifying the return of the Emperor, and requiring their assistance in the re-establishment of his authority. Advices arrived at Paris on the 25th, that, excepting in the north, where the presence of the family of the Count de Lille repressed the public spirit, the tricoloured flag was replaced in the greater part of the departments. The Duke of Belluno, who was marching to Paris with the troops of the second military division, had been obliged to quit his command, the soldiers unanimously declaring for the Emperor; the third and fourth military divisions, likewise, sent in their addresses, which were delivered to the Emperor on the parade on the 24th. The Duke of Albufera and General Gerard had witnessed and assisted in the enthusiasm of all Alsace, Franche Comté, and Burgundy, so early as the 23d. Normandy and Brittany had restored the national standard. The Duke of Bourbon quitted Angers as the troops marched against him; he embarked on the Loire the 26th, having given up a concerted

* See Appendix—No. 5.

project of enrolling all the male inhabitants of the country from eighteen to fifty. The Count de Lille was said to have left Lille; 40,000 of the imperial forces being on the march for that town. He did leave it the 23d, and the whole north declared for Napoleon on the following days. General Clausel repaired towards Bourdeaux, where the Duchess of Angouleme was inspiriting the partisans of the Bourbons by every effort, and by the invitation of 12,000 Spaniards, to join in *quelling the insurrection.* Marshal Massena had seen Toulon hoist the national colours, and was employed in tranquillizing Marseilles. Bourdeaux was in possession of the imperialists by the 2d of April, and such was the address of General Clausel that he employed only 200 men in restoring this great town to the reigning authority. The general was himself spectator of the extraordinary scene which passed on the quay, where, after Madame had made use of threats, intreaties, and promises, to induce first the troops of the line and then the volunteers to fire on the fortress La Bastide, a sudden fusillade took place amongst the volunteers themselves, who concluded the efforts of the Bourdeaux royalists by an act of frenzy, wounding several, and killing a captain, of their comrades on the spot. The efforts of the Duke of Angouleme were of longer duration, but that prince was

put down chiefly by the national guards of Dauphiny, and taken prisoner, as you have seen. The letter which the Emperor sent to Count Grouchy, dated the 11th of April, giving permission to the duke to embark at Cette*, attaches a condition to this permission which I fancy has not been fulfilled, although the duke has embarked—I mean the restoration of the crown jewels, which the king carried away with him, to the amount of 13,834,046 francs. Marseilles hoisted the tricoloured flag on the 12th. On the 17th of April, that is, in less than a month after the return of Napoleon to the Tuileries, the news of the whole of France being restored to tranquillity under the imperial government was announced by a salute of artillery fired at one o'clock from all the batteries at every part of the empire. Up to that day addresses had continued pouring in from all parts of the country, from the municipal and military bodies. With the exception of Marseilles, where the soldiery have been kept on duty in the streets, no resistance of the public authority was dreaded for the remainder of the month; but early in May, when the emissaries of Louis had succeeded in spreading the report that the allies were determined

* See Appendix—No. 10.

unanimously to support the pretensions of the Bourbons, the partisans of that family recovered their stupor, and proceeded to those excesses in the departments of the north and west, the Maine and Loire, and Lower Loire, which produced the report of the 7th of this month (May) from Fouché, and the consequent decree of the Emperor on the ninth, renewing the constitutional laws against the royalists. Fouché, in a circular letter to the prefects on the 31st of March, cautioned them against the excessive exertion of their authority, against the renewal of the *police of attack* instead of the *police of observation*, against a minute officious curiosity, destructive of social enjoyment, and against every kind of conduct which might make the police appear the sword instead of the torch of justice. This wise and liberal policy of the new government was abused by the royalists. You will observe, however, that Fouché in his report confines himself to general assertions, except in the two instances of tearing down the tricoloured flag in Calvados and the massacre of a major.

Our countrymen, who now affect to have believed every thing said or implied of the unanimity of France, pretend to an excess of pleasing surprise at the confession of Fouché; but if they will consider a moment, they will be rather

astonished at the concord than the disunion of the majority of Frenchmen, amongst whom cannot be reckoned at this moment, even after all our machinations in La Vendée, as many decided acknowledged enemies of the actual government as every Irish paper confesses to be inimical to the authority of George III., out of a population of five millions of subjects in one of the British isles. The Duke of Otranto is even suspected, and indeed accused, of having exaggerated the cause of alarm, in order to justify rigorous measures, and make them less suspicious to the constitutionalists*.

Napoleon lost no time in reorganizing his empire: his first care was directed to the army, of different corps of which he held repeated reviews and inspections in the court of the Tuileries. Every regiment in the service addressed him in terms of unqualified devotion. All the officers on half pay, who followed the Emperor, and who were in Paris, were immediately put in activity by an order of the 24th. On

* In his second report to the Emperor, read to the two houses, June 17, he certainly took no pains to conceal the disaffection of some provinces, and even went so far in one instance, that of Caen, as to state a town to be in insurrection where there had been only two insignificant quarrels in the street between individuals, as the prefect of that place stated to the house of representatives.

the 21st Napoleon reviewed the Elbese battalion. On the 24th he inspected two divisions—and the chasseurs and lancers of the guard. On the 25th ten regiments of infantry, six of cavalry, and two of artillery, passed before him. Most of these troops had arrived by forced marches at Paris, to assure or partake the triumph of their favourite.

The Emperor took care to converse with the officers and men on the parade; a familiarity due, I think, to their affection, and by no means unworthy of him or them. The first week was chiefly occupied in reviewing the troops, and in measures of internal reorganization. Some regiments, indeed, passed before the Emperor every day up to the 28th.

On Sunday, the 26th, the ministers waited on the Emperor in the Tuileries, and presented him an address of congratulation, to which he replied in these words:—"The sentiments you "express are also mine. Every thing for the "nation, and every thing for France; such is "my devise. I and my family, which this "great people have raised to the throne of the "French, and which it has maintained in spite of "political vicissitudes and alarms: we wish not, "we ought not, and we cannot, lay claim to "other titles than these." The council of state then presented a deliberation extracted from the

registers of the meeting of the 25th: it declared all those acts by which Napoleon had formerly risen to power, legal; all those which gave claims to the Bourbons, illegal; because not originating in the people, and only arising from the temporary misfortunes of the country; and concluding "that Napoleon, by remounting "the throne, restored the most sacred rights "of the people." The Emperor's answer was short, but sufficiently definite:—"Princes," he replied, "are the first citizens of the state. "Their authority is more or less extensive, ac- "cording to the interests of the nations which "they govern. Sovereignty itself is heredi- "tary, only because the interest of the people "requires it. Except on these principles I "know of no legitimacy. I have renounced "my ideas of that great empire, of which in "fifteen years I had not laid the foundation. "Henceforth the happiness and the consolida- "tion of the French empire shall be the object "of all my thoughts."

The Emperor received the addresses of the court of cassation, of the court of accounts, of the imperial court of Paris, and of the municipality of the capital; to all of which he returned short answers, nearly to the same effect as that given to the council of state, except that he told the Parisians he had given orders for the recom-

mencement of the works of their city, and deferred those of Versailles to a future period. Also that he had taken the command of the national guard. General Durosnel was named second in command*.

News had now arrived that the king's household had submitted at Bethune; and the Duke of Treviso, at the audience on this Sunday, gave intelligence that all the garrisons on the northern frontiers were secured from a *coup de main*. An address of Augereau to the sixteenth military division, dated from Caën, proclaimed his repentance, and the fidelity of his troops†. On the 27th Napoleon reviewed several regiments, and a battalion of the polytechnic school, to two of whom he gave crosses of the legion of honour, for their defence of Paris in 1814. He confirmed this day the commissions granted to captains, lieutenants, and sublieutenants, by the Bourbons; and by an order of the minister of war, on the 2d of April, a commission was formed to examine into the pretensions of all officers, up to the rank of lieutenant-general, promoted by the king. A notice appeared in the Moniteur of the 28th, informing those strangers who wished to leave France, that their passports should be signed at the foreign

* See Appendix—No. 6.

† This man is now sitting on Marshal Ney.

office. This article was inserted to give confidence to those who were alarmed lest they should find themselves in the predicament of the English detained after the peace of Amiens. In fact, no foreigner has been confined or restricted in his movements since the return of the Emperor*.

In the same Moniteur appeared the procès verbal of the minister of finance, and the treasury, relative to the disappearance of the crown diamonds; the order for carrying which away

* In one of the French royalist papers appeared a paragraph on the 4th or 5th of July, stating that those Englishmen who had been arrested or detained by the imperial government had been released, and had received passports from the provisional commission. No Englishman had ever been arrested or detained except by mere mistake; and those who presented themselves at the proper offices were given to understand, that every facility would be afforded them of quitting the country whenever they thought fit. The embargo which was put on the ports at the departure of Napoleon for the army was only a temporary measure, and the passports given to Englishmen were to be used upon any opportunity, whether of an American vessel, or a boat, or any other method which they could contrive to adopt. I repeat, no Englishmen were ever detained by order of the imperial government, and the contrary assertion was only a royalist fabrication to incense our countrymen against Napoleon and his adherents. The writer of these letters, from a sense of justice, prepared a paragraph to this effect, for the Moniteur, after the king's return; but was informed it would not be inserted.

was signed by the king and M. de Blacas on the 13th of March, and the receipt for the delivery to M. Hue, first valet de chamber and treasurer of the king's household, on the 19th of March, the eve of the king's flight. One of the caricatures of the day represents his majesty and M. de Blacas running away with this national ore. This act has not added a little to the unfavourable sentiments now rising even against Louis himself in France, where a notion has gone abroad, that the jewels of the crown belong to the crown, not to the monarch; and should be in the keeping of the master of the Tuileries, not of the inhabitant of the chateau of Ghent. The diamond called the regent, valued at six millions, was amongst the missing property. The imperialists point this out as the return made to the nation for having agreed to pay the debts contracted by the princes of the house of Bourbon in their exile, which have been since found chiefly to relate to the expenses of the emigrant armies, and agents employed against France. It will be recollected that during the eleven months reign, a commission of French and English members was appointed to settle the debts owing to Englishmen, upon the civil list of Louis the sixteenth, of which Napoleon without any obligation had liquidated a portion. The commission met many times, but

not a farthing was ever paid to any one of our countrymen, who thus obtained more from the generosity of the Emperor than from the justice of the King. General ———, who was ruined by his detention at Verdun, and was creditor of the Bourbons to the amount of a hundred a year, applied time after time, and never recovered any portion of his pension. The commission had not, as he told me, got so far as even to consider either of the individual claims.

By an imperial decree of the 29th the slave trade was abolished. Mr. Wilberforce, who declared himself in the house of commons, on the 20th of March, perfectly satisfied with what Lord Castlereagh had not done for that portion of the human race of which this gentleman has been so long the worthy orator, never pronounced himself satisfied with Napoleon, the whole of whose religious measures I have observed have, if possible, given greater offence in England even than the atheistic, theophilanthropic, mahomedan propensities with which he has been charged. The restoration of good order and decency, whether in morals, politics, or religion, as well as every other measure tending to heal the wounds of revolutionary fury, were in the eyes of the admirers of legitimacy unpardonable crimes, and no one act of Bonaparte has gained him more foul language than

the concordat. The reason is obvious: virtue and religion were thought to be engines solely reserved and lawfully monopolized for the use of the props and admirers of the ancient social system, the priests and nobles who had just at that time want of some such things or words. As long as the anarchy and atheism of France were to be opposed by all the moral policy of Europe, the victory, though distant, perhaps, was thought to be certain; but when it was found that Bonaparte would not allow himself or his nation to be any longer excluded from the pale of christian civilization, and had laid his unlawful laic hands to the work of piety, which the pure partizans of the ancient regime wished the whole world to think it was their exclusive right and power to perform, the clamour against usurpation became more violent, and excepting a few civil expressions used at the peace of Amiens, and soon retracted, together with a compliment from Louis the eighteenth to "Mr. Bonaparte," accompanying a claim to that gentleman's crown, every act whether of the consul or emperor, favourable to the church, was decried as an impious treachery, an unhallowed, insincere cheat and mockery of God and man; just as every exploit productive of internal security and national prosperity was ascribed to the vile suggestions of tyranny and ambition. The honest creatures, whose own mo-

tives, no doubt, would bear sifting so thoroughly, proclaimed they were not to be deceived by such pretensions and professions, or even by the actions of the man whose virtues were but the satanic snare to entrap that loyalty and love which were inherited, together with all other appurtenances of admiration, gratitude, and obedience, by the lawful owners of France. It is scarcely worth observing, that the real reason of this anger and antipathy in the French royalists to the specious reform of Napoleon may be each traced to the fear, that such conduct would be fatal to the hopes of the dethroned princes and their expatriated dependents; by showing that good might be expected at other hands than their own. But it is not so easy to account for the majority of our English politicians coinciding with these sentiments, excepting, perhaps, by supposing that the tories are in their politics like that sort of religious persons which hate to hear that any one suspected of infidelity has any morality, or has begun to reform even his theological opinions; from the fear that these merely moral or repentant characters should be saved at a less expense than they themselves have been at, to make their calling and election sure. I recollect hearing a very religious man regret bitterly, that the author of Political Justice had recanted

his scepticism—since such fellows would act their part more becomingly, consistently, and more productive of general edification, to die and be damned without any cowardly or interested tergiversation. When the late member for Yorkshire heard that in the claim for the benediction of the blacks, the favourite object of his life, his most powerful rival was Napoleon, one may easily conceive the sensation of a person who would rather have the earthly anti-christ for his enemy than his coadjutor.

On the 30th of March, the works of Paris were re-commenced at the fountain of the Elephant, the Louvre, the new market-place of St. Germains, and the office of foreign affairs: the next week the workmen were doubled —the streets recovered their former names— the public buildings their imperial inscriptions —the theatres were declared on their ancient footing, and the imperial conservatory, for the education and maintenance of actors and singers of both sexes, restored. This is the only establishment of the kind in Europe; it was commenced under the republic, but received its present endowment chiefly from Napoleon. The representations take place every other Sunday, at two o'clock, when the pupils, in their usual dresses, sing and recite portions of operas and plays to an audience

which pays for admission, and thus contributes to support the institution. M. Talma is the principal professor of declamation. The suppression of the conservatory by the Bourbons was a measure the economy of which was not sufficiently considerable to be set off against the odium occasioned by this declaration against the amusements of the Parisians, who had rather be limited to their ounces of bread, as in the days of terror, than be deprived of their shows. None but ignorant and obstinate governors neglect to consult the feelings of their subjects in those trifling particulars. The minority of the Duchess of Angouleme might look upon the conservatory as well as the masquerade of Lent as an innovation of republican impiety; but it was the part of a king to listen to no suggestion subversive of that principle which Sir Walter Raleigh, in his advice to Prince Henry, ranks amongst the most notorious and simple maxims of state policy;—namely, that a sovereign should always side with the majority, against the weaker and less numerous party of his subjects.

The Emperor's bust was replaced by acclamation at the saloon of the conservatory, as were his statue, and the foreign colours preserved during the last reign, and hidden in the king's time, in the theatre of the legislative body. This last step, together with replacing

Carle Vernet's grand picture of the battle of Marengo in the Louvre, and similar proceedings, unimportant as they may appear, did not lose their effect; as indeed they were indicative that the time had arrived, when the French were no longer to be ashamed of their former exploits, nor regard the trophies of their glory as the emblems of treason and usurpation. The lilies of the last government have been but partially erased in the palaces and public buildings, and nothing is done towards the restoration of the imperial initial so offensive to taste and modesty, and the source only of the famous play upon words, *il a des N mis, (ennemis) partout.* Napoleon whilst at Elba was informed by an Englishman of the erasure of his N; he laughed at this as a trifle, adding, *peut-etre aurai-je mieux fait de ne les avoir pas mis du tout!* He made no war upon the symbols of royalty, as even the Moniteur was issued with the king's stamp up to the 28th of April. He allowed the use of the *timbre royal extraordinaire,* up to the 1st of May, and of the *timbre royal ordinaire* to the 1st of July.

On the 31st of March he visited and spent some time at the establishment at St. Denis, dedicated to the education and maintenance of the daughters of members of the legion of honour. This institution originating in Napo-

leon, it was part of the folly and the system of the Bourbons to neglect. Not once, except after the news of the landing at Cannes, was any attention paid by either of these princes to this truly national establishment, associated by the dearest of all ties to the honour and glory of France. On the same day a decree restored the university to its former footing, and appointed Count Lacépède chancellor of that body. The institute presented an address on Sunday, the 2nd, to the Emperor, beginning thus:—"Sire, the sciences which you culti-
"vated; the letters which you encouraged,
"the arts which you protected, have been in
"mourning since your departure. The insti-
"tute, attacked in its happy organization, saw
"with grief the imminent violation of the depôt
"entrusted to its care, and the approaching dis-
"persion of a portion of its members."

The institute alluded to the alterations made by the ordonnance of the king, by which, the Bonapartes, Carnot, David, and other members were excluded from that society. Amongst the other persuasions of Frenchmen, by which an unhappy contrast is made between the two dynasties, is the notion, whether founded or not, that as Napoleon is the known lover and patron of the arts and sciences, so are the Bourbons the pronounced enemies of both, and of

such as have risen to any eminence in them, in the days of treason and immorality. The same enmity is supposed to extend to all mental improvement and illumination; and hence the order of the *extinguisher*, invented to fit the heads of the princes and others, a piece of humour which is carried to its full length in the caricatures and periodical publications of the day. I recollect one evening seeing a fellow parading the palais royal with a high paper cap in the form of one of these utensils, amidst the shouts of a most disreputable crowd, who, to all appearance, could be very little solicitous about the advancement of literature and the arts. They had a right, however, to pretend an interest in that improvement, with which the happiness and well-being of every class of society are progressive and proportionate. The pleasantry of the extinguisher commenced in the *Naine Jaune*, before the return of Napoleon, and was not a little mischievous in a country where a pleasantry is so effectual. Lists of certain pure royalists, in anagram or otherwise, with a figure of one or two extinguishers opposite to their name, were published, and augmented, by a kind of proscriptive ridicule, the personal odium attached to the friends of the new-old system. Napoleon has taken care to visit all the scientific establishments: he went to the Garden of

Plants on the 6th of April, and the same day called on Mr. David, with whom he remained an hour examining his picture of the Pass of Thermopylæ; these visits he pays without any suite or giving notice of his arrival—a simplicity which I observe to be most effectual in the successor of Louis. On this Sunday, the 2d, the imperial guard gave a fête to the national guard and garrison of Paris, in the Champ de Mars. The common soldiers, to the number of 15,000, were placed at tables in the open air; whilst the officers dined in the galleries of the palace of the military school. After the repast, which was served up in presence of an immense multitude, on the sloping sides of the plain, and which was interrupted by many military songs and other toasts to the health of the Emperor, the Empress and the imperial prince (for so the King of Rome is now denominated), repeated to the sound of music, and discharges of artillery, the whole mass of guests and spectators rose to the shout of some voices which cried out "to the column!" The procession, carrying a bust of the Emperor, with music, moved towards the Tuileries, and presented itself under the imperial apartments with unceasing acclamations, to which Napoleon replied by appearing at the window, and saluting the enthusiastic multitude, who then repaired to the column of the

grand army in the square Vendôme, under which the bust of Napoleon received a solemn inauguration; at which moment the pedestal of the pillar and the houses of the square were spontaneously illuminated, and rings of soldiers, national guards, and citizens, danced round the monument of their former glories. The evening ended, with a procession round the boulevarts, the palais royal, and principal streets of the neighbouring quarter. No excesses, no insulting of royalists, no turbulent shouts, or menacing gestures; in short, no sign of the triumph of one citizen over another was displayed during this fête. The Napoleonists have been marked with every principle of forbearance and reconciliation, and union, which distinguishes the consciousness of strength and a good cause; nor until it was but too apparent that they should have to fight for their altars and their hearths, did even the lower classes of the suburbs vent their indignation against their domestic enemies by clamours which were soon allayed, and were unproductive of any fatal consequences. What the conduct of the royalists is likely to be in case of triumph, you may judge from what they have done, and what they say they will do. Of the latter, the best of specimens was given in the intercepted letters of the Angoulême party in the south.

The Count of Guiche, writing to *his mother* from *Pont St. Esprit*, the 29th of March, after telling her, "that the *barbarian* Bonaparte had only 8,000 men at Paris, and that he, the Count, with the Duke of Angouleme, were on the point of entering Lyons without striking a blow;" continues, "the Marshals have remained faithful with the exception of one, *whom we will hang outright:* he goes on—

"My very good mother,

"I feel myself inspired: this is my presenti-
"ment . . . . . in a month the king of France
"will be in his capital. I fancy we must hang
"and shoot a good many of them, the worth-
"less fellows! they have sworn fidelity, and
"they betray the best of masters! At this
"moment all French are *passés au creuset*, and
"the hand of God points out the separation
"to be made between the good grain and the
"chaff: the fire is the place for the chaff—
"there we must cast it; then shall we be all
"pure, and worthy the government of our
"king . . . . . "

"Le bon fils,

(Signed) "COMTE DE GUICHE."

This good son who entertains his good mother with hangings and shootings, and asks her

whether she is not happy to know that he is about the person of so august a prince!!! if I mistake not, has been employed in God's work of separating the wheat from the chaff, from his youth upwards, by doing his best against his countrymen in the imperial armies. I have seen some letters from the Emperor when at the head of a victorious army, but the barbarian Buonaparte did not console his Josephine in this tender style, nor spoke of the enemy and his own forces, then in presence of each other, except in such terms as these:—"General Beau-"lieu and myself are trying to overreach each "other, but I think I shall succeed first.—I "like him better than his predecessor."

And shall we go to war to furnish ropes and bullets for this good son, who, after having succeeded in making the proper sacrifice of the rebels at home, might return our kindness by employing himself and regiment in our own country, should an occasion present itself, and in the same pious purification.

This Count of Guiche speaks the language of all the royalists, and the publication of his feelings and fraternal intentions had the expected effect in Paris and France, no less than the dispersion of the Duke of Angouleme's letters, in which he would have done well to

confine himself to telling his wife to make *un petit bulletin exaggeré* of the affair of the 30th, and to boasting to her of his ride of twenty leagues, half of it upon bidets; "*ce qui n'est* "*pas mal—aussi j'ai le postérieur légérement en-* "*dommagé.*" The duke's ride is no bad thing to do, but his royal highness had better have flayed his whole body, and beat up for royal volunteers with a Zisca drum of his own skin, than have told his wife that he was about to disorganize the army—"*Je vais travailler à desor-* "*ganiser tous les regimens,*" and than have required of their brother and cousin, the King of Spain, "*de faire entrer ses forces dans le* "*royaume comme auxiliaires du Roi de France.*" M. de Vitrolles, commissary extraordinary in the south for the king, in telling Madame, in his letter of the 1st of April, from Toulouse, that they were taking measures for withdrawing the garrison from Perpignan, and begging her to do as much for Bayonne, that the Spaniards might find no obstacles, was no less an enemy of his cause than the Duke himself. I have been assured by some imperialists in Paris, that the most powerful and effectual engine the government could employ against the southern royalists was the publication of these letters, until the appearance of which affairs in that part of the country wore an aspect, to say the

least, of the utmost uncertainty. But the Bordelais, although inclined to the Bourbons on account of their inclination for peace and commerce, had, since the days of the revolution, been distinguished for their patriotism; and even during the last government had vented some loud complaints against the continuance of the *droits reunis*. They understood very well that, whatever political differences they might have amongst each other, the knives and muskets of the guerillas of Spain, neither the most merciful nor discriminating of men, were not to be the first resource employed in arranging their disputes. Those, therefore, who would have "brought the excise and Spa-"niards in" began to lose their popularity; the peasantry of Dauphiny flew to arms; the troops of the line revolted; and the forces of the Duke of Angouleme gave way; whilst those of the Duchess fired upon one another. The commissary extraordinary and his Moniteur-Vitrolles could hold out no longer at Toulouse; he was arrested by General Laborde, and his papers seized, on the morning of the 4th of April; and the public opinion which had driven the Bourbons from Paris assumed the same direction and acquired the same irresistible predominance in the departments of the south as in the rest of the empire.

The Emperor, however, was obliged to take some decisive measures when the extent of the resistance was known at Paris: the decree of the 25th of March, banishing the king's household to thirty leagues from the capital, was published on the 8th of April, and on the same day the laws of the national assemblies against the family and adherents of the house of Bourbon were declared in vigour. But this decree, which caused no bloodshed, nor was ever wanted or carried into effect, was accompanied by another on the same day, in which it was shown, that the government did not intend to content itself with punishments alone, but would make provision for the reward of those who had suffered in the national cause. The receipts of certain eventual sums not carried to the budget were, together with the funds of the extraordinary domain, allotted to form an extraordinary chest; half of which should be applied to rebuilding the houses destroyed in the last war of 1814, and the other to making good the donations granted formerly to the pensioners of the army establishment, and infringed upon by the last government. On the 8th of April, an edict regulated the duties on liquors, and suppressed all vexations which had made the excise laws one of the chief grievances under the imperial and royal government.

The king had promised to reform them, and Monsieur at his entry into France, in 1814, had joined *No droits reunis* to *No conscription*, in order to make a royal watch-word, sufficiently intelligible and alarming to every citizen and peasant. Louis retained this impost for 1815, and paid his promise with another promise, that the chamber should examine the subject at their next session. Napoleon in this and other points seems the very Spartan of Louis; all the one says the other does. His decree on this subject begins with stating the motive of its promulgation to be the complaints of the people, which permit of no delay, and excuse the precipitancy of the measure. It must be told at the same time, that the change made is in the collection of the tax; the odious visitation of excisemen, which created such a ferment once in our own country, being abolished, and another method of collecting the same revenue being proposed for the deliberation of the municipalities. The reduction of the public expense to be dated from the 1st of June, consisted in discharging the excise officers, and in taking the impost duty from all towns containing less than four thousand souls.

The first public act emanating from the government containing any hint that apprehensions might perhaps be entertained of an im-

mediate war, appeared in the publication of a report from the Duke of Vicenza to the Emperor, dated the first of April, which made its appearance in the Moniteur of the ninth; all the extracts previously given in that and other journals from English and other foreign newspapers tended to encourage an expectation that the allied powers would not interfere with France. But that report conveyed the demand of the diet of the cantons, that the Swiss regiments in the French service might be sent home immediately. The Duke of Vicenza stated to the Emperor, that this demand was entirely irregular, and contrary to the articles of capitulation agreed upon between France and Switzerland, in 1812. The Swiss regiments, not having followed the king, shewed they evidently thought themselves in the service of France, not of the individual monarch, and consequently subject to the conditions of the capitulation by which they entered that service; their recal, therefore, by the diet was not conformable to former treaties between the two powers. Napoleon, however, permitted all the individuals of the four regiments to retire from the territory; only giving them the choice of entering into two battalions, to be formed of their countrymen in Paris and the departments of the north.

On the same day appeared the decree of the Emperor, dated the 28th, recalling the *whole army*, on whatever pretence absent, to their posts—commanding the organization of twelve regiments of the young imperial guard at Paris, out of such military as should possess the requisite qualifications, and forming a skeleton fifth battalion for every regiment of infantry. It must be observed, that no addition was made by this decree to the actual force of the empire, such as it was, or supposed to be, under the king. The officers and soldiers were only commanded to join their ranks. No new levies were ordered; and, indeed, by the sixth article, only two out of five battalions were to be completed and put into readiness for service. This disposition contained nothing to which the allied powers had any right to object. The people of Paris saw, however, in it a confirmation of the fears begun to be entertained at the non-appearance of any friendly propositions from any foreign minister, or of any prospect of the arrival of the Empress and the King of Rome. In the review of the day before at the Tuileries, where twenty regiments of infantry and cavalry from the left bank of the Loire passed before him, Napoleon made a speech to the troops, in which he told them, "the French did not wish to interfere

in the affairs of other nations; but woe betide those who would wish to interfere with theirs, and to treat them as Genoa and Geneva had been treated *."

On the 10th appeared the Prince Regent's message, communicated to parliament on the 6th of April, informing the two houses of the augmentation of his forces by land and sea, and of his precautionary communication with the combined sovereigns.

Napoleon had tried in vain, by a peaceable posture, to recommend himself to the allies: his next chance of tranquillity was to show that the nation could defend itself. The day after the Prince Regent's message to his parliament was seen in the Paris papers appeared the decree for calling out the national guards throughout the whole empire; that is, every man between the age of twenty and sixty, with the exceptions previously made by the imperial decree of the 5th April, 1813. Those paying a contribution of fifty francs and upwards are now obliged to furnish themselves with arms, which are, for the poorer classes, provided by the departments. This measure was taken at the moment the telegraphic dispatches announced the pacification of the south. The paper that

* See Appendix—No. 9.

proclaimed these preparations mentioned also, in an article from Strasburg, the approach of German regiments on the right bank of the Rhine, and the cutting of the bridge of Kehl. No secret has been made since this time of the immense preparations for war. Yet the publication of the debates on the Regent's message in the Moniteur of the next day, the 12th, concluded with the rejection of the amendment proposed by Mr. Whitbread, on the *pretext* that the address contained *no provocation to war.* But M. de Caulaincourt, in his report to the Emperor, two days afterwards, seemed to be of Mr. Whitbread's opinion, and to think the message sufficiently warlike to justify any alarm, or cause any preparations on the side of France. Indeed the truth became too apparent and too big for further concealment, and the Moniteur of the ensuing day contained the famous declaration against Napoleon Bonaparte, of March the 13th, binding all Europe to carry into effect the excommunication of the political consistory assembled at Vienna, and to make good the threats of sundry individuals, more or less known, whose names were attached to the document in due alphabetical arrangement. The publication of this provocation to assassination, with the ensuing observations of the council of state, was very justly accompanied by a tre-

mendous columnar array of all the corps of the whole imperial army, and the posts assigned to them, for the information of the soldiers recalled to their regiments. A circular of M. Carnot's, dated the 12th, enjoined all the prefects to exert themselves in carrying this measure into complete effect. The Moniteur of the 14th, by giving the Duke of Vicenza's report to the Emperor, informed the French what had been done to maintain the peace of Europe, and by shewing the preliminary obstacles, whether official or unofficial, which had been thrown in the way of all attempts at accommodation, appealed to the nation whether the time was not come for preparing the means of resistance. French couriers had been stopped at Mayence, at Turin, at Kehl; Monaco had been occupied by the English, a vessel taken by an English frigate, and a hundred and twenty French soldiers, returning from Russia, and twelve officers, intercepted on their route by order of the Prince of Orange.

The conclusion from these events, to whatever they might lead, was inevitable. The papers attached to the minister's report contained the letter written by Napoleon to the sovereigns of Europe*, as also that of M. de Caulaincourt

* See Appendix for the letter, and Lord Castlereagh's answer.

to the ministers of foreign affairs at the different courts. They are both dated the 4th of April.

I took the liberty, in a conversation with one of the Emperor's aide-de-camps on the 14th, when I heard this letter had been returned unopened by the Prince Regent, and transmitted to Vienna, to recommend another application, upon the pretext of the entire pacification of the empire, which was afterwards announced, as I have mentioned, on Sunday the 17th, and which might have some effect upon the fears of the justice of the English cabinet. "Nothing but "an extreme ignorance of the real state of things "in France" could occasion, I thought, "such unaccountable conduct." "We have tried," said the general, "to let them know the truth, "but they will not hear us: however, the Moni- "teurs get to England, they will see the truth "there." *Certainly, they will see it, but they will not believe it:* they will believe the Austrian Observer instead. "Well, but your country- "man is gone to London; he will tell what is "the real posture of affairs." *They will not believe him either:*—"If so," rejoined this gentleman, "what is the use of any further attempt "at communication? However, I cannot help "thinking that every thing is as well known in "London as at Paris, and that your government

"have eyes, but shut them." The simple reply to which was, only to ask him if he had ever read our Courier, or seen Lord Castlereagh. It was more difficult to find an answer to his question as to the utility of future correspondence. 'A circular of the Duke of Otranto to the prefects, in the Moniteur of the 15th, in which he said, that the alarms and inquietudes conceived by the continental powers at the first news of the restoration of the Emperor would subside when those powers were aware of the unanimity of France and the peaceable disposition of the nation and the Emperor, might, if at all credited in England, have had some influence on public opinion; but you have told me, and I learn from other quarters, that vanity, anger, fear, obstinacy, and every selfish passion, have so blinded the eyes of our statesmen, that truth, if it tried all the shapes of Proteus, would be seen or be agreeable in none. Instead of believing the Moniteur, our good ministers gave credit to the Austrian Observer, one article of which, on the 15th of April, said that the Tuileries looked like an intrenched camp, being filled with troops and cannon with lighted matches. But the ministry have appeared anxious that as little communication as possible should take place between the two

countries, for fear disagreeable facts should find their way to the parliament and the country; for a French commissary, sent to Dover on the 8th of April, to demand the reciprocal and usual interchange of letters and journals between Calais and that port, was told, that not only his proposition could not be listened to, but that he must quit England the same day. Yet the packet-boats had not been stopped: no hostilities of any kind had then commenced; for no less than six French vessels, having been detained and visited by British men of war, were suffered to pursue their voyage—neither had even the slightest violation of the frontier been hazarded, until the 21st and the following days of the last month, whe some foreign troops maltreated the custom-house officers at St. Amand and at Nussdorf; and some boatmen belonging to Strasburg were attacked on the right bank of the Rhine, and robbed of their boats*. The Emperor, finding that his letters were not read and that his couriers were arrested, was obliged to have recourse to the public prints, as the only means by which he could

* It was not until the 29th that the Melpomene was taken—nor were the arms landed in La Vendée until the first week in May.

communicate with the sovereigns*; but since the publication of his letter on the 14th of April, he ordered another attempt to be made on the side on which the chance of success appeared the greatest. The minister of foreign affairs wrote to Prince Metternich on the 16th of April, and transmitted the dispatch by a courier. The courier was arrested at Linz, but the letter was sent on to Vienna. That it has failed of its effect is sufficiently apparent, since, from the 19th, all communications have been cut off with the German frontier; which blockade, connected with the arrival of the Archduke Charles at Mayence the day before, demonstrated too clearly the spirit and intentions of the Austrian cabinet†.

M. de Flahaut was made the bearer of a pri-

* This the Duke of Vicenza owns in his letter of the 16th of April to Prince Metternich, telling him, *that the Emperor of Austria must have read the letter written to him by the Emperor of the French in the newspapers*—a new way of corresponding between imperial fathers and sons-in-law.

† Since the date of this letter, I see by the Duke of Vicenza's report to the Emperor of the 7th of June, inclosing Lord Clancarty's letter to Lord Castlereagh, that the bearer of the letter was a M. de Strassant—that neither the letter of the Duke of Vicenza, nor that from Napoleon to the Emperor Francis, were opened before they were shown to the Congress by order of the Emperor; and that the resolution taken by the plenipotentiaries was to return no answer to either, nor to take the propositions in consideration.

vate letter from Napoleon to the Emperor Francis; but was not suffered to proceed in his journey. The Duke of Vicenza made his courier the bearer of this or a similar letter, from the Emperor to his father-in-law. This I believe to have been the last official effort made to renew a correspondence with the sovereigns or the congress; and since M. de Montron has found the futility of any personal applications at Vienna, the language of hope, either explicit or conveyed by hints, respecting the dispositions of the father of Maria Louisa, has been dropped in conversation, though not in the Moniteur. The queen of the fête, it is feared, will not grace the Champ de Mai. Many an anxious look has been turned towards her and her son, who if he were present, some pretend to say, would be the occasion of an abdication in his favour. However, the Duke of Otranto's circular to the prefects on the 13th of April contained these words, *we are at peace;* nor, with the exception of the irregular marauding on the Belgian frontier, has any act of decided hostility yet become known to the capital, where very many still think that all will end in peace. It would have been nearer the truth for the minister of police to have said, "we are not at war," and perhaps more consistent with the documents with which his circular was followed up in the

Moniteur of the same day, which gave an address of the minister at war to the soldiers recalled to their posts, by a decree of the 28th.

" *Vous avez voulu votre Empereur—il est ar-*
" *rivé. Vous l'avez secondé de tous vos efforts.*
" *Venez, afin d'être tout prêts à défendre la pa-*
" *trie contre des ennemis qui voudraient se mêler*
" *de regler les couleurs que nous devons porter,*
" *de nous imposer des souverains, et de dicter nos*
" *constitutions. Dans ces circonstances, c'est un*
" *devoir pour tous les Français déjà accoutumés*
" *au métier de la guerre d'accourir sous les dra-*
" *peaux.*

" *Presentons une frontière d'airain à nos enne-*
" *mis, et apprenons-les que nous sommes toujours*
" *les mêmes.*

" *Soldats! soit que vous ayez obtenu des*
" *congés absolus ou limités, soit que vous ayez*
" *obtenu votre retraite, si vos blessures sont cica-*
" *trisées, si vous êtes en état de servir, venez;*
" *l'honneur, la patrie, l'Empereur vous appellent.*

" *Quels reproches n'auriez-vous pas à faire, si*
" *cette belle patrie était encore ravagée par ces*
" *soldats que vous avez vaincus tant de fois, et si*
" *l'étranger venait effacer la France de la carte*
" *de l'Europe.*

(Signé) " LE PRINCE D'ECKMULH."

The same day's journal contained the famous papers found in M. de Blacas' chest, fit to be put by the side of the minister at war's appeal to the soldiery; and showing how much the whole of France was interested in presenting a frontier of steel against those princes who, even at the moment of their first restoration, and before their return, were plotting against the independence of their subjects. In those papers you see at how early a period the Bourbons were counselled to employ all the good and all the bad feelings and passions of the people, their love, their fear, their apprehensions of some of their own body, their confidence in themselves, to cheat them of that constitutional government which the French had hoped should emanate from their own will, but which the restored dynasty was to contrive either should not exist, or, if existing, should be acknowledged to originate only in their own condescension and remission of lawful authority.

In the last document you may perceive a truth which ought to convey instruction to those who imagine that there is a large portion of the French people essentially Bourbonists, and who will not recognise the real fact, that the enthusiasm with which the king was re-

ceived in France arose from no attachment to his majesty or his family, but the persuasion, that in his person the nation was secure of peace and of a constitutional king. I extract a passage of this letter, which you may wish to see in the original*.

The Moniteurs, from the 14th of April up to this time, have contained daily more or less detailed accounts of the preparations making for the war by the allies, and of the corresponding efforts of the departments in raising the national guards. The minister of the interior addressed the prefects to encourage the organization of these troops on the 12th of April; and the first review of those of the capital, of which I have given you some account, took place on the 16th. That body returned the feast given to them by the imperial guards on the 18th, and gave them a banquet at the *Conservatoire des arts et métiers*, at which 720 guests sat down to table. The most prominent symbols of the day were the bust of the Emperor crowned by France, who, with the other hand, presented a tablet, with the inscription *Constitution, Liberté, Patrie.* In the same spirit, the Duke of Otranto gave as a toast, the constitution of the *Champ de Mai*; and the health of the Empress and the imperial

* See Appendix—No. 7.

prince, proposed by the minister of the interior, together with a vow for their speedy return, showed that the court wished still to encourage the hopes of peace. No menaces nor triumphant exultations of any kind, nor even expression of confidence, which could offend the nationality even of an Englishman, were heard during this day of rejoicing. This forbearance, so frequently manifested on other occasions, arises from the wish of France to remain at peace:—a wish so unanimous, so sincere, and so ardent, that the allies are bound in duty to see in that inclination the most complete and satisfactory guarantee against the ambition of Napoleon, whom they alone supply with the power of aggression, by justifying in the eyes of all his subjects the measures of defence.

The same feeling caused the regret which was so evident at Paris at the news of Murat's advance upon the papal territories, and of the opening of the campaign between him and the Austrians. The proclamation of the King of Naples to the Italians appeared in the Moniteur of the 22d of April, that of General Bellegarde in the journal of the 20th of that month. The account of his successes has never been firmly believed, notwithstanding it was confirmed by private letters, secreted in a bag of silver sent to a banker of Paris; and the best informed

here saw in this renewal of hostilities by a member of the imperial family another obstacle to the peace of France.

The programma of the constitution, which appeared on the 23d of April, professed the desire of the Emperor to maintain this peace with all the nations of Europe. This desire, however, did not prevent a further disposition for resistance; for, on the 22d, an imperial decree invited the formation of free corps in the frontier departments of the empire, to be raised by officers commissioned for that purpose, and appointing their own captains, lieutenants, and sub-lieutenants, and consisting either of national guards, unemployed at the time, or of volunteers, receiving neither pay, nor arms, nor accoutrements, but only subsistence during the actual campaign. A decree of the day before re-established the cannoniers of the coasts, dismissed by an ordonnance of the 4th of June, 1814. On the 24th was formed the federation of Brittany, a part of France which has been selected for this compact as being that in which the partisans of the emigrant dynasty are in the greatest activity. A similar federation was signed in 1790, at Pontivy, now Napoleonville. The first article of the compact shews in what manner it is thought that the most successful opposition may be made to the Bourbonists of

France. "The object of this federation," say these patriotic Bretons, "is to consecrate all its "means to the propagation of liberal principles, "to oppose truth to imposture, to enlighten the "erroneous, to sustain the public spirit to the "level of present circumstances; to oppose all "disorders; to maintain internal security; to "employ every influence and credit to retain "every one in the line of his duty to his prince "and his country; to bring an effectual and "prompt succour to the first requisition of the "public authorities, whenever there may be "need; to protect the cities, towns, and villages "when menaced; to defeat every plot against "the liberty, the constitution, and the sove-"reign of the state; and, lastly, to lend each "other a mutual assistance and protection, ac-"cording to circumstances and events." In the songs which were sung at a banquet given at Rennes, on the 13th, on the occasion of this federation, a stanza of some couplets set to the Marsellaise expressed what I believe to be the general feeling of France.

Aux jours où notre belle France
Voulut recouvrir son honneur,
Nous avions bien la vaillance,
Nous n'avions pas notre Empereur.
Des parties souillaient la victoire,

Tous, vous marchez au même rang,
Vous verserez bien moins de sang,
Et vous n'aurez pas moins de gloire.
Braves confédérés, brave peuple Bréton,
Servons la liberté, l'honneur, Napoleon.

The Emperor, in other words, is the head and the hope of this new revolution. This being the case, Lord Castlereagh's exception to the eighth article of the treaty of the 25th of March, which appeared in the Moniteur of the 1st of May, and in which the common effort of the allies is confined to the opposition of Bonaparte, is seen here in the true light of an attempt to disengage the nation from its chief; and is as little heeded as those furious declamations against the French armies that disgraced the two houses of the English parliament on the discussion of the treaty of Vienna. On the 30th of April Napoleon confirmed this union of interests between the subject and the sovereign, by his decree for the formation of primary schools on the report of Mr. Carnot—and gave the next day, by the convocation of the representatives and the modification of his original decree concerning the constitution, a surer pledge of the sincerity of his intentions in favour of individual independence and happiness. The Moniteur of the 3d of May inserted the proclamation of Justus Grüner, from Düs-

seldorf, promising the plunder and division of France to the brave Germans; and as a set off against this menace, and the proclamation of the King of Prussia, the hate and horror of France, an article appeared in the same sheet containing a short detail of the military defences already completed, and preparing at all points of the empire. A circular letter from the minister at war of the same date, to the prefects, sub-prefects, and mayors, exhorted them to inspire the inhabitants of the cities, towns, and villages, with that patriot spirit which distinguished Tournus, Chalons, St. Jean de Lozere, Langres, and Compiegne, in the campaign of 1814. The fortifications on the heights of Montmartre were commenced about this time; six hundred workmen were at first employed, and the number was afterwards increased to ten thousand: these persons, in traversing the streets to the heights, generally sing the Marseillaise and other patriotic songs.

The Emperor visited the suburb of St. Antoine on the sixth, where he examined the new manufactures of arms, and promised the inhabitants of that quarter (many of whom crowded about him) that forty thousand musquets and able officers should this year put them in a state capable of defending the capital. Napoleon was

accompanied only by three officers when he made this visit to the suburbs. The federation of Burgundy and of the Angevins followed that of Brittany; and, as you have seen, this measure has been extended to the suburbs of of Paris on the 10th, and to the city itself on the 19th. The proclamations of the allies, and particularly of the King of Prussia, are given as the motives of this levy in mass. Voluntary contributions are another measure of national defence which the present crisis has extorted from the exhausted purses of the French. In the department of the Aisne 1100,000 francs have been collected; and one woman, at the parade on the 14th, gave into the Emperor's hand a note for 25,000 francs. At the same time, that is, in the second week of this month, the debates in the English parliament and the address of the city of London for peace a little revived the hope that the imposing appearance of France would work a favourable change in the policy of the allies. In the Moniteur of the 11th appeared this notice: "The minister of "general police has received a telegraphic dis-"patch from the prefect of the department of "the north conceived in these terms.—*Lille*, "10*th May*. The Duke of Wellington has "forbidden his soldiers to put foot on the "French territory under pain of death."

Letters from Vienna, published in the Moniteur of the 12th, began thus: "I do not yet "believe in the war," and "The time for the "departure of the foreign sovereigns and of "the Emperor of Austria from Vienna is not "yet fixed." Yet the postmaster of Menin announced to the director of the posts at Lille, on the 12th, that all communication between the two countries would for the future cease. The minister at war on the 20th renewed the order to all officers of every rank to apply for routes to their corps, and an order of the day from Count Lobau, commandant of the first military division, cautioned the troops under his order of the necessity for the strictest discipline and vigilance, especially in the prevention of desertion, a paper having been thrown into Cambray which offered 80 francs to any trooper, and 20 to a soldier of infantry, who would quit the eagle of France for the lily of Ghent. The report of the Duke of Otranto on the 9th had already discovered the efforts of the royalists in other quarters of the country, and I believe it to have been published merely to show that the enemies of France, who hope to find in the present liberal dispositions of the Emperor an engine to be employed against himself, will see that the government has been hitherto inactive in this

respect, not out of ignorance and fear, but from the better motives of clemency and forbearance. Such have been the principal public transactions from the arrival of the Emperor, up to the date of this letter, and you will perceive from this detail that in the situation of the empire from the landing of Napoleon to the present day three great changes may be remarked; the first of which, comprehending three weeks, expelled the Bourbons from the capital; the second, in nearly the same period, restored the power of Napoleon throughout the whole French territory; and the third, in about an equal short space of time, has converted the listlessness of peace into the vigilance of alarm and war.

LETTER XIII.

Paris, May 28.

EVERY one is in the greatest anxiety at the turn which politics may take in England, which is still an object of some hope, notwithstanding the ineffectual attempts made at negotiation, and notwithstanding the violent language of our parliamentary combatants. I see a Mr. Douglas recommends, as a preliminary to the peace, the cutting the throats of all the French army. There are several gentlemen of that name in parliament; but my French friends tell me, that it is the one who was peculiarly well received by Napoleon at Elba, and by the society of the imperialists at Paris. If so, Mr. D. is an old schoolfellow, and a very good acquaintance of mine, and I shall make no comment, except in the words of Tom Jones's lieutenant: "O fie! "*all* is rather too bloody minded a wish:" perhaps he would reply with the Salisbury landlady, "to be sure, it is natural for us to wish "our enemies dead, that the wars may be at "an end, and our taxes be lowered; for it is

"a dreadful thing to pay as we do!" I feel persuaded, however, that there must have been some mistake in the report of this gentleman's speech; for those who have the pleasure of his intimacy must have so good an opinion of his understanding and his disposition as to acquit him of entering heart and hand into the politics of the sanguinary side of the house.

I confess that it has not been without a mixture of horror and contempt that I have listened to the cold-blooded recommendations of human slaughter, tricked out in all the tawdry pomp of commonplace, which drop so often from the lips of English orators, and which are so sure of a favourable reception from an English audience, that it requires the boldness and unwearied patriotism of a Whitbread himself to stand forward the opponent of military glory. I know of no way in which a member of parliament can give such a complete proof of his courage as in recommending peace, by which he braves the dull declamation and the pert pleasantry of orators of all ages and professions; who enter the lists against him with so much

greater activity and good will, as they seem to fancy they associate themselves to those warriors whose bravery they so kindly call into play, and to partake in some measure the glory they shall gain.

It would have been a matter of some surprise to me to see amongst the supporters of the war in parliament a description of persons whom one might expect rather to find conferring their blessing upon the peace-makers, had not their previous practice long taught me to reduce their principle of action to a very simple motive, which is connected neither with war nor peace, except so far as the one or the other line of policy may happen to be the order of the day with the givers of all good things. I by no means intend to undervalue the claims to independence which have even in our times distinguished the very powerful class of citizens, of which these gentlemen are the representatives, and from which, as there appears no other principle now in activity amongst us, it may be hoped sufficient opposition will always be found to prevent the public mind from stagnating into entire apathy, and unconditional non-resistance.

Whilst there are a million and a half of our fellow-countrymen who would die rather than resign the rights of conscience, we may feel secure that there exists in England an insuperable bar against the designs of despotism. But it must be confessed, that the parliamentary leaders of these enemies to ecclesiastical encroachment seem to have a propensity in favour of state authorities with which the great mass of their followers can by no means be charged. For this I understand from our friend Mr. ———, they quote the conduct of the disciples of St. Paul, amongst whose duties is particularised the "taking care in all things not to offend the ministry." If the abolition of the slave trade, and the institution of primary schools, was intended by Napoleon to entrap the admiration of this portion of our parliament, the Emperor could have been but little acquainted with those respectable characters.

For the heathen amongst us, perhaps there are some who will be pleased with each of the above mentioned measures, and will suggest to themselves a comparison between the royal and imperial laws, by no means unfavourable to the

latter government. It may be, that the abolition of the slave trade, which all the late and faint importunities of Lord Castlereagh and the letter of Mr. Wilberforce were unable to procure, and the imitation of our Lancastrian schools, were intended as an oblique compliment to the wishes and institutions of England; and indeed Mr. Carnot's report of the 29th of April, on the latter subject, cannot fail of pleasing the ears of our countrymen. If this be so, there is nothing dishonourable in such an intention, and as the means chosen to please us must be of such infinite benefit to the cause of humanity and of civilization, no supposition of state policy can take away the honour properly belonging to those by whom they have been adopted. The friends of the *ancient social system* must indeed see in these measures a just object of suspicion, and a decided proof of the hostility intended to them and their cause by the authors of those dangerous innovations on barbarism and ignorance. This is a conduct widely different from the restoration of the inquisitorial and commercial cruelty of the

slave and saint trade, of factories and monkeries, under the happy auspices of either branch of the house of Bourbon. Napoleon and the Jacobins must have intended these measures to form an ingenious contrast between their acts and those of the ancient dynasties, for the use of the wilful opponents of Lord Castlereagh; and as such, I am not surprised that they are decried by all the good men and true belonging to that noble lord, and held up to the contempt of parliament as springes to catch the short-sighted, narrow-minded politicians of the party, and not the sedate Athenian fowls, conversant with darkness, who are wise enough to see and heavy enough to break through the snare.

Whilst the ministers and their friends can make use of this argument, there is no conduct on the part of Napoleon which will reconcile our parliament to a peace with France. Institutions the most sage and liberal for the interior of his empire, the most just and equitable offers to the other powers,—all will be regarded with equal jealousy, as contrivances to recommend usurpation to his subjects and to the potentates of Europe, and as tending to establish the dangerous precedent, that the choice made by a nation of its sovereign may be justified and confirmed by the subsequent

efforts of the man so elevated to show himself worthy of that choice.

I presume you have read the answer to the declaration of the 13th of March, in the Moniteur of the 13th of April, given in the form of an extract from the register of the council of state, and countersigned by the Duke of Bassano. It is reckoned a masterpiece of argument, and contains a kind of declaration of the virtual abdication of the Bourbons, in imitation perhaps of the similar paper drawn up by the lords and commons of England against James II. I confess there appears to me something ingenious, or rather lawfully artful, in the preliminary position taken up by supposing the whole to be a forgery of M. de Talleyrand and the French plenipotentiaries. Not that the government are deceived; they know well enough that the representatives of the allies, and that the Duke of Wellington, to whose character and nation they contrive to pay the compliment of supposing his signature to be the surest sign of forgery, did put their names to this atrocious and absurd paper; but they take the vantage ground of civility, in addressing to a Frenchman remonstrances and reproofs which are obliquely intended for the ears of the allied sovereigns themselves. Little

can be added to the document, and to you little need be added; for I believe that public opinion in England has declared itself sufficiently against this which has delighted our ministerial journalists, and in which their correspondents must see such a glorious restoration of old forms and ceremonies. The great patron of the ancient social system must himself have favoured the ministerial journals with the head-line of the declaration, in which we find *Bonaparte put to the ban!!!* The declaration itself makes no mention of this excellent term; although, by excluding the offender from "all social and civil relations" with his fellow-creatures, it does encurage his assassination. There are, however, certain people who are not content with doing a foolish thing without designating it by some ridiculous phrase or epithet. The dilemma to which the framers of this political excommunication have reduced themselves seems simply this:—If Bonaparte was considered by them solely as a rebel, endeavouring, as it must have appeared to them on the 13th of March, at Vienna, with inadequate means, to excite a rebellion, the sovereigns of congress could have no motive nor justification for their interference in the case of France, any more than they could have had for declaring against an attempt made to dethrone the King of England or the Emperor

of Russia; for, notwithstanding the hopes and plans of the allied monarchs, it is not to be supposed that the sovereigns of Europe can by any treaties guarantee mutually to each other the perpetual possession of their crowns for themselves and their dynasty, against all inclinations and efforts of their respective subjects. In such a supposition the congress of Vienna could be considered in no other light than a conspiracy against the liberties of Europe; and any Englishman who assisted at such a meeting would deserve to lose his head as a traitor, whose negotiations might subject his countrymen to the invasion of 100,000 Prussians or Russians, as the stipulated succour belonging to one of the high contracting parties. Napoleon Bonaparte then could not, if their interference were called for, be regarded as a mere rebel to the King of France. But if he was not regarded in that light, but looked upon as a sovereign invading the territories of a province whom the allies were bound by treaty to defend, war might be declared, perhaps, upon that prince, but not in the terms of the declaration which treated him as rebel. The declaration, besides, may be viewed in another light as ridiculous; for, if the invader were in a condition which rendered the denunciations of congress formidable to him, he might have been crushed with-

out such a compromise of the dignity of the respective sovereigns; whereas if he were too powerful for such threats to injure him, that is to say, if he were master of France, the indulgence of impotent rage and vengeance was equally absurd in that point of view.

In fact, even the complaisance of our parliament was not relied upon for swallowing such a gross morsel; for the declaration, I see, was only half avowed and half defended by our cabinet orators. The framers themselves dropped their outrageous language in the treaty of the 25th of March, but without reconciling the purposes of this league with any principles of common sense or justice: I mean as far as relates to England, whose objection to the eighth article of that treaty is perhaps an attempt to cajole, not only the English and French nations, but the whole of Europe, more pitiful and unprecedented than might be expected even from the present government.

Scarcely was this objection to the eighth article made, scarcely was it pretended that the English could not consent to go to war with the view of imposing *any form of government* upon France, but merely to displace Bonaparte, than the interpretation, as it was called, of the original article, was found to admit of a latitude either way; and in the

official letter of Lord Clancarty to Lord Castlereagh, which is a sort of renewed and reasoned declaration, dated Vienna, May the 6th, the refinement of our cabinet was reduced to its real insignificance by the avowal, "that the "sovereigns did not intend to influence the "conduct of the French relatively to such or "such a dynasty or form of government, *except* "*as far as might be essential to the security and* "*permanent tranquillity of the rest of Europe.* "If France shall give reasonable guarantees to "this effect, such as the other states have a "right to require for their own defence, their "object will be fulfilled; and it is with joy that "they will enter then into that state of peace, "which then, and then only, will be within "their reach." If there were any in England weak enough to be deceived by the appearance of moderation (and I see that argument has been used in parliament), the words above quoted must have been sufficient to correct their credulity, and to reduce to its real value the liberal generosity displayed by us, in telling the French they may establish any sovereign authority, save that of one man, without the interference of England. Even allowing the sincerity of this declaration, the mockery of calling such an offer the giving a freedom of choice to France is sufficiently glaring,

and something similar to that proposed to a man who has the door shut upon him when the house is on fire, and is told he has his choice of either of the windows. In vain he begs to be allowed to extricate himself in the readiest manner, and deprecates the other outlets, because, in spite of their rope-ladders and blankets, he may be knocked to pieces in the descent. The allies are kind enough in offering to break the fall of France; but it is not to be wondered at, that she wishes not to fall at all, but rather to adopt the means of preservation the nearest at hand, without having recourse to extreme experiments. Napoleon is actually in possession of the power—the dethroning him is not the gate of salvation. Considering the manner in which he returns to the throne, and the abandonment of it by his competitor, it is not to be expected that the great majority of Frenchmen, having tacitly admitted his claim, should, on the remonstrance of foreigners, suddenly decide themselves to have acted unjustly and foolishly. They may admit of the necessity of giving a security for the peace of Europe, but they must not be excluded from doing so in the only manner which it is consistent with their own honour and safety to adopt. The objection of the allied powers, it is said, is not to France, but to Napoleon,

whom they are determined to deprive of the capacity of future aggression. If France herself deprives Napoleon of this capacity, by the establishment of such a constitutional government as shall make the actions of her monarch dependant upon the national will, the end of the allied sovereigns is answered; and if they distrust France, and think she will herself be aggressive, then they *do* make war upon France; and if they make war upon France for this motive, it is not only a falsehood to assert that the object of attack is Napoleon, but it is an absurd cause, if real; since, whoever succeeds to Napoleon, should this monarch fall, would be obliged to yield to the national bent, by pursuing projects of ambition.

That a due guarantee would be given to the allies against the absolute power of Napoleon, the formation of a representative government, and every evidence of the ascendant gained by the people in this country, are sufficient to make more than probable. The constitution which he himself has proposed, by putting the purse of the state into the hands of the house of representatives, makes the declaration of war as dependant upon that house as it is upon the English house of commons; but in the alterations which the chamber, when met, will propose, it is doubted whether the declaration of war will be left to the crown; for I see that

a pamphlet, addressed to the representatives, earnestly recommends taking away this prerogative from the sovereign, as well as putting the army into the hands of responsible and national officers*. Those who aver, that Napoleon, seconded by the army, would find means to crush the rising spirit of liberty, and to resume his former power in all its plenitude, know nothing of France, as you have, by this time, seen, nor of the army, which would second no such project. It is possible, as I have said, that the nation, being itself ambitiously inclined, would aggress; but such an inclination would not depend upon Napoleon any more than upon any other limited monarch, therefore the removal of him would not allay the apprehensions of the neighbouring peoples. There are but three methods of removing the fears entertained, or professed to be entertained, by the allies—the deposition of Napoleon—the disarming of the ambition of Napoleon by converting the despotism of his former throne into a constitutional monarchy—or the entire destruction of the French armies. The first method has been proved to be as unreasonable for the allies to expect, as unproductive of the end they propose; the second plan

* The sovereign was never to take the field by the constitution made during the siege of Paris.

is looked upon as feasible only in France, for the other powers are either actually blind to the present disposition and moral state of this country, or wilfully shut their eyes to them; and the last—the system of extermination, is at once adopted, as the only resource, according to that policy, so popular in England, which has given to the iron argument, the *ratio regum*, the first instead of the last place in royal dialectics. The force of arms is to drive Napoleon from his throne. Suppose the purpose accomplished, and that only half a million of men have fallen in battle, and fifty times as many been ruined and made wretched. The throne is vacant—the war ceases—and the French choose another sovereign, that is, if the original interpretation of the eighth article be sincere, and acted up to by the conquerors —but is the peace of Europe secured? what guarantee is there against the newly elected sovereign, especially under the supposition of his being absolute, which the allies think must be the case? The annihilation of the army of France, if brought about, will not annihilate the revenge of France, nor, if the above declaration of her integrity be adhered to, her power. The war, therefore, which the allies declare against Napoleon only, supposing that pretext to be believed, leaves in reality no option to France;

and as the object which the allies aver as the real motive of this war seems so entirely unattainable by the method proposed to be pursued, there is no other conclusion to be formed but that the reserves and exceptions hinted at in Lord Clancarty's letter will turn out sufficient excuse for the imposition of any sovereign chosen by the congress, if not for the dismemberment of France. Such of the constitutionalists here as cannot yet reconcile themselves to Napoleon *pretend* to give some credit to the declaration of the allies that they make war on Napoleon alone, but only, I believe, for the sake of encouraging a whisper that the Emperor will, by abdicating at the Champ de Mai, put the truth of that declaration to the test. It is not easy to foresee what would be the event of such an act; for myself, I believe that, as nothing would so embarrass the allies, so no news would be received with such consternation, though all would end, I suppose, in the advance of the 1,100,000 bayonets into France, in search of Lord Clancarty's reasonable guarantees*.

* The Censor of the next month, No. VI. did require, in as many words, this sacrifice of Napoleon, from himself, not from the nation. The words are remarkable, and serve to shew the *constraint* under which the press g ed during the late reign.—" *En* 1814. *Napoléon si l'on en croit*

" *son conseil d'état, abdique l'empire pour prévenir une guerre*
" *civile, et pour mettre une terme à la guerre étrangère. En*
" *1815, il se ressaisit de l'autorité; sur-le-champ la guerre*
" *civile eclate, la France est menacée de l'invasion de tous les*
" *peuples de l'Europe, et cependant il retient la puissance*
" *dans ses mains. La patrie lui est elle moins chère cette*
" *année que l'année dernière, ou une abdication en faveur des*
" *Bourbons lui parait-elle preferable à une abdication en fa-*
" *veur de son fils?*"

LETTER XIV.

Paris, May—.

I HAVE hitherto regarded the war as far as France is concerned. You may now ask why Napoleon does not make this personal sacrifice, and thus having rescued his country from a dynasty considered by many whether justly or not to be no less dangerous than incapable, and having, by convoking a representation *really* national, and reorganizing her disbanded armies, made her happy at home and respectable abroad, retire from his painful pre-eminence with more glory than Dioclesian, and with a self-devotion not unworthy of Codrus or any ancient name? To this I answer, that perhaps Napoleon may be as entirely persuaded as you are that his abdication would not preserve the independence or integrity of France. His proclamations and speeches, of course, hold that language, and his friends, together with far the greater part of the constitutionalists, laugh at the protestations of the allies, although they have been as yet retained, by a wish to go every length to reconcile the English cabinet, from openly asserting that the stipulation relative to the eighth

article of the treaty of the 25th of March is nothing but an excuse for aggression, and a lure to loosen the allegiance of France to her new sovereign. Add to this, that the Bourbonists do every thing in their power to bring discredit upon these protestations and our stipulation, by asserting that the natural consequence of the retreat of the Emperor would be the return of the king, and that for this object alone Europe is now at the gates of France. With the conviction, then, that his abdication, though it might put the right and justice of France in a more favourable position, or rather, render it altogether unquestionable, would give her no other advantage than that which right and justice can bestow on a disputed cause, which is ....., Napoleon may fairly look upon his retreat as a compliance with an unjust demand, productive neither of honour to himself nor utility to France. Without this conviction, the preventing motive must be an egotism and selfishness, of which, to say the truth, he is more than suspected, even by his firmest admirers, and which, combined with a just reliance upon his own abilities and the intrepidity of the French armies, may induce him to prefer trusting his own destinies and those of his empire to the decision of the sword. He has spilled blood enough, and if in any point of

view, since his return, he can be regarded as provoking the war about to ensue, without the adoption of every means, and the sacrifice of every personal feeling, to preserve the peace of France and of Europe, let the hatred of all honest men, now dispersed amongst the sovereigns of congress, be collected into a focus, and fall united upon his guilty head.

The friends of the ancient social system (I thank Lord C. for the phrase, and must be allowed to use it) in every country in Europe have joined with the honest Metternich, the unprejudiced Hardenberg, the unassuming Razumouski, the virtuous Talleyrand, and our own Clancarty, in the outcry against the return of Napoleon, as an act unprecedented even in the annals of ambition, and arrayed in all the characteristics of atrocity—with more of perfidy, ingratitude, and violence, than is to be allowed even to the obliquity of ambition—a sort of treason against our common nature—a *lèse-majesté*, human and divine, such as the parliament of Rouen imputed to Henry IV. These accusations, when considered merely as the terms in which the allies choose to couch their declaration against France, are of little moment. The nations of modern Christendom have always seemed to like the ceremony of being told why they are to be mutually slaughtered and

pillaged—the reason does not matter as to weight, or application, or truth, so as it be assigned. Louis XIV. informed his subjects that they were to carry fire and sword into the states of the empire, and that all true and faithful subjects of France would fly to arms, to recover some old furniture belonging to the Duchess of Orleans.

Whether old furniture or old systems are to serve the turn is perfectly indifferent. Certain reasons have always been given in all due form, and though they were as plenty as blackberries, no others are required, or would be offered. But until these days it was not expected that any reasonable man should be the dupe of a mere form, or should imagine that monarchs really considered themselves, and were determined to act, as the patrons and preservers of every religious and moral duty. However, it seems that the awful train of good and just, which form so large a portion of mankind, call for vengeance upon the *first* man who ever broke a treaty, and have devoted him to punishment, to deter others from the commission of the like unheard of crime, and the invention of new and monstrous infringements upon public right.

The believer in the right divine of certain reigning houses may think, that as every attempt to overthrow the Emperor Napoleon, in

the wars formerly waged against France, was justified by the holy end in view, so no breaking of treaties by either of the allied sovereigns can be brought in excuse of a similar conduct in one not born with the privilege of looking upon expediency as right. But an Englishman must see this matter with very different eyes, and, notwithstanding the common forms of hostility justified the government of his country in former times, in refusing to acknowledge the title by which Napoleon held the sovereign power, or, in other words, to call him Emperor instead of Consul of France, yet he cannot for a moment hesitate in allowing the pretensions of that great man to all the rights of sovereigns to have been as full as can be acquired by the founder of any dynasty—a position, by the way, that a diet of the old empire would find it difficult to controvert. The British government were willing to make peace with this Emperor, and had peace been made, would never have dared to insult the liberality, and do a violence to the justice, of their countrymen, by alleging the want of hereditary title as a fair excuse for breaking such a peace upon the first expediency.

An Englishman, therefore, cannot regard the infraction of the treaty of Fontainbleau by Napoleon in any other light than he would

the violation of the same or another treaty by any other monarch. The imposition of force has always been thought a sufficient excuse for making and for breaking conditions. A war was never begun without the belligerents on both sides being accused by some and excused by others for want of faith, and no one objected to the efforts made by the sovereigns of Europe to throw off that subjection to which they had solemnly stipulated themselves, by putting their signatures to the Confederation of the Rhine. Every one thought it very natural that the King of Prussia, when reduced to four towns, and to a dependance which made him eye every stranger at his little court at Kœnings-berg with fear, lest he should have orders from Napoleon in his pocket to carry him away, should seize the first opportunity of recovering his throne; and every one characterised his desertion of the French as an honourable effort to rescue himself from an insignificance to which he had been sunk by force alone.

The violation of his engagements with his son-in-law, by the Emperor of Austria, was not called perfidy, but, on the contrary, a glorious sacrifice to public duty. I believe it to have been neither one nor the other, being persuaded that a little better management with Mr. de Metternich would have secured at least

the neutrality of Austria. That minister, of whom the saying of Napoleon ran through Germany, "*J'ai M. dans ma manche, qui a un "Empereur dans sa poche,*" was insulted by the manner in which Napoleon opened the conference with him at Dresden, by saying abruptly—"Come, Metternich, tell me how "much they have given you?"—for he turned pale—gave no reply, and soon withdrew, and from that moment, said the Duke of Bassano, (who was at the interview) we could never get him to treat, and soon found that Austria was determined.—If, then, so far from being angry with Frederick or Francis, we applaud them for escaping from their vassalage to Napoleon, and for no longer continuing to be the accomplices of their own insignificance, what occasions our indignation at the resolution taken by Napoleon, of being no longer inactive than the force which contracted his former empire to a rock in the Mediterranean should continue to confine him to so narrow a circle? He had surely as full a right to be discontented with being Emperor of Elba as had Frederic William to be King of Kœningsberg; and I conclude that an endeavour to recover a lost crown is just as respectable a passion, and as justifiable an act, in the one as in the other un-

fortunate sovereign. The one as well as the other must be judged guilty of that "violation "of right for the sake of reigning," which, from its gallant disregard of all the petty interests and feelings of human nature, we have agreed to designate as the infirmity only of a noble mind. The fact however is, and I defy the most skilful casuist to prove it otherwise, that the allied sovereigns, in spite of all their former compliances and engagements, and England, notwithstanding the contempt of *legitimacy* which has governed her own internal conduct, do consider Napoleon in the light of an adventurer, and can find no other cause of offence distinguishing his infraction of the treaty of Fontainbleau, which Mr. de Talleyrand is said to own to have been signed *le pistolet à la gorge*, from any other violation of a royal signature, than his not being the son of a king. He does not own this in his memorial, but his glory might have allowed the admission of that truth, and the egotism and ingenuity of Horace would have so well suited him that he might have used the very words—

> Nunc ad me redeo libertino patre natum
> Quem rodunt omnes libertino patre natum.

The Emperor of Austria, who boasted in his declaration of war in 1813, that he was of the

oldest family in christendom, and complained that he should have suffered so much, after condescending to give all his quarterings a place in the scurvy escutcheon of the house of Ajaccio, wished at the marriage of Maria Louisa to have employed some of the genealogists in the service of the *all high*, (the title given to the military and official slaves in Austria on the turnpike tickets)—in making out a tree for his future son-in-law from the pedigrees of Tuscany, in which country the Bonapartes had formerly owned titles of nobility. Napoleon laughed at the proposal, and said, "his family could be dated no higher than "the *dixhuit Brumaire*." The blood of the house of Hapsburgh was suffered to mingle with the ignoble stream; and, if the daughter of that house is herself to be believed, she found no reason to be discontented at the union. She used to call Napoleon by many tender names; and she told an English lady of my acquaintance, that had he been neither an Emperor nor an hero, she should have still preferred him to all the world. It is certain, however, that the feelings which the Emperor Francis chose to put in the front of his merits at the commencement of his struggle have now assumed their full force, upon the success of that effort, and that as much is now to be done to exclude

his daughter from the throne of France as was formerly hazarded to maintain his aunt upon the same pre-eminence. The balance of power, all former jealousies, all conveniences of juxtaposition, all objects of family grandeur, are to be overlooked rather than unteach the world the happy lesson which showed the fatal end of all revolutions; and rather than the will of a people should appear to have any connection with the rejection or choice of a sovereign. Is there any one who will say, that if by accident the Dauphin, Louis the XVIIth, had been placed by a party, after the revolution, at the head of the republican armies, had discovered the same genius and the same ambition, had run the same career of glory and defeat, he would have been deserted with the same indifference, overwhelmed with the same obloquy, pursued by the same rancour, and doomed to the same fate as we have seen reserved for Napoleon? Would Austria, after having given him a daughter, detain her from her husband and subvert her throne in opposition to the dictates of interest and inclination? The question will admit of no other solution. Napoleon was not born to the purple—"the head and front of his offending hath this 'extent—no more."

By this he hath offended the sovereigns of

Europe, but not the peoples—George Prince Regent—not you and me.

I have not mentioned the infractions of the treaty of Fontainbleau, with which Napoleon charges the other contracting parties, the treatment of the Empress Maria Louisa, his wife, of Joachim, King of Naples, his brother-in-law, the refusal of the stipulated pension to himself, and the attempts made upon his life by the Bourbon governor of Corsica. These prefences I cannot suppose the real cause of his invasion of France, although I think them a very citable excuse; but it is a fresh proof of his being considered out of the pale of sovereignty, that no attempt has been made to refute the charge. On the contrary, the apologists of Louis XVIII. avow his effort to dispossess Murat of the crown of Naples, and his withholding the pension of Napoleon, and they excuse him. The sequestration of the Bonaparte property was pronounced by a decree, bearing date the 14th of December, 1814, as you have seen in the Moniteur of the 11th of April. With respect to the attempts at assassination, I shall only say that the officers who attended the Emperor at Elba assert them to be undeniable. The Colonel Jermanouski * informed me, that the imperial staff had established a police amongst themselves, and that

* Not Termanouski, as erroneously printed in some of the preceding pages.

the district of Porto Longone was entrusted to him. He employed as a spy the physician of the English consul. They received previous information of the fellow sent by Brulart, governor of Corsica; and having, upon his arrival, shown him that they were totally aware of his project, they disarmed him of a rifle gun which he had brought with him, and sent him from the island. Another Corsican, of the name of Pompeio, they detected in the same scheme, and contented themselves with dismissing him likewise. It was natural, that upon seeing how punctually the stipulations made with him and his family were kept, Napoleon should also expect more violent injuries, and perhaps an infraction of the main article of the conditions upon which he had abdicated the sovereignty of France. The rumour, whether founded or not, that it was proposed at congress to remove him to St. Helena, had certainly reached him—he talked of it to an English friend of mine, adding, "it will be no easy matter to drive me and "my grenadiers out of these rocks; neither of "us will quit them alive." No! whichever way I look, I see nothing in the enterprise of this man, except its magnitude, which distinguishes it from other violations of treaties, prompted, as are all such transactions, by motives of interest, excusable on some grounds, unjustifiable in others.

The event hitherto has shown, that as far as France is concerned, the seal of success, the true stamp of right and propriety in such efforts, has given to it the character which it will bear with an impartial posterity. Those who believe that his professions of love to France were to be credited will not attempt to excuse—they will glory in his conduct, and with reason; for when he divined from the position of France, to use his own words, that she was on the eve of a revolution, for the establishment of a free government by the final overthrow of a dynasty which he judged to be effete and arbitrary, he was right in hoping that such a noble project might be accomplished by himself, rather than by the united patriotism of rival demagogues.

Machiavel allows, I do not say with what justice, that a commonwealth is seldon well turned or constituted except it hath been the work of a single person; and the republican Harrington, who quotes this opinion in a chapter of the Oceana, avers "that a wise legislator, and one "whose mind is finally set, not upon private, but "public interest, not upon his posterity, but his "country, may justly endeavour to get the so-"vereign power into his own hands; nor shall "any man that is master of reason blame such "extraordinary means as in that case will be ne-"cessary, the end proving no other than the con-

" stitution of a well ordered commonwealth." If it could be proved the king broke the contract with his people no less than James with our ancestors, his abdication would then be pronounced to have been completed by that by which the British lords were willing to designate the deposition of James, the *desertion* of the throne. In this view of the subject he had incurred the penalties of abdication; for, to use the words of Serjeant Maynard, " if attempting the utter destruction of the subject, and the subversion of the constitution, be not as much an abdication as the attempt of a father to cut his son's throat, I know not what is*."

Bonaparte, foreseeing this abdication, and thinking he had a right to profit by the circumstances producing it, has given the best proof of his ambition taking the direction prescribed by Harrington by his subsequent conduct. I allow that the formation of a happy constitution in France cannot be alleged to the allies as a pretext for breaking the treaty of Fontainbleau: indeed I solemnly affirm, that it is my belief, that such an object, so far from excusing, is in their eyes an aggravation of offence; for what would be the danger to the neighbouring despotisms, did 27,000,000 of the most enlightened and active portion

* Parliamentary Debates, 1688.

of the population of christendom compose a well-ordered commonwealth? The *bare right* to declare war must, I suppose, be allowed for the maintenance of the treaty of Fontainbleau, but not for the exterminating purpose assigned by the ministers of congress. The government of England may also have the bare right to join in an endeavour to reduce the Emperor to his Elba. But the having a right never supposes or includes an obligation, according to the strictest rules of political morality; and if from any consideration Great Britain chooses to resign her right to enforce the treaty of Fontainbleau, there is no implied duty which can recommend a contrary conduct, unless it should be said, that by the treaty of Paris she guaranteed the crown of France to Louis XVIII, because that monarch was one of the parties; a position which would suppose a necessity of her taking part in any civil war which might endanger either of the contracting monarchs, or their descendants, which is absurd.

The utmost that can be allowed is, that we have a right to go to war, and a right not to go to war. The treaty of Paris was made, not with Napoleon nor Louis, but with the monarch of France. This may be objected to upon the grounds, that less favourable conditions would

have been granted to the French under the former than the latter sovereign: but I deny that such would have been the case; for the conditions offered to Napoleon at Chatillon were at least as good as those given at Paris to Louis. I see this objection has been made by Lord Castlereagh—I refer him to his own offers at Chatillon. The treaty of Paris is still preserved by the monarch of France—no matter whether that monarch be Louis the Eighteenth: but allowing that he is Napoleon the First, who bound himself by treaty to reign no more in France, and to whom alone, therefore, the other parties signing that treaty have a right to object; they have of course a right not to object, for they did not enter into a mutual engagement to each other to exclude him from the throne. It was he that gave up his pretensions, and they that received his resignation; and guaranteed, in return, the grant of certain advantages for the abdicated monarch and his family. If England shall not consider her interest concerned, seeing the general state of affairs in France, in insisting upon the continuance of that exclusion, she has as much right tacitly to resign that privilege, as her monarch had to give up the title of King of France in the treaty of Amiens. I ask whether the abdication of Fontainbleau can in any way be called

a treaty of alliance offensive and defensive, excluding the right of neutrality, in case the cessions on either side should fail to be made good? or whether each of the parties, who supposed themselves to gain by the abdication of Napoleon, may not resign the pursuance of that advantage? Did they bind themselves mutually to pursue it? I answer no—not until they signed the declaration of the 13th and the treaty of the 25th of March; which, therefore, unless the honour and interest of our country should be concerned in the execution of them, the British parliament may fairly disapprove, and refuse to lend its assistance in carrying into effect. The ministers tell us they have pledged the honour of England to their high allies for the dethronement of Napoleon. They committed the honour of England by the precipitance and violence of the declaration of the 13th of March; and, finally, it is for the representatives of the nation to determine, whether the loss of Lord Castlereagh's place may not be almost as simple and efficacious a manner of preserving the credit of the country, as the loss of Napoleon's throne. We have here but little hopes that the parliament will see the matter in the light in which it appears to every Englishman without exception, I believe I may say, who is now on the spot, and to those French-

men who have the best reputation for independent principles.

I see by the Moniteur of yesterday, that Lord Liverpool says we may be considered in a state of war since the Regent's message on the 22d, and that an embargo may be put on at any time. Still the communications are perfectly free, and the English papers are to be met with at the usual reading-room in the Rue Vivienne. Very many pretend, that in spite of all this, England will not go to war—it is so evidently, say they, her interest and her duty not to support the pretensions of kings against the rights of peoples; but, for this reason, I consider the war to be certain. What can be expected from Lord Castlereagh? By the way, his state paper relative to Saxony has astounded those who honoured this prophet here as he is honoured in his own country. What a performance!!! If I did not happen to know the channel through which it has been communicated to the public, (I inclose the original French), I should scarcely believe it to be authentic. His lordship asserts, that he is not answerable for "the translation of a translation:" his dispatches, like those good things called puns, may be untranslateable; but, that the destinies of Europe should be in such hands, shows the gods in the same pleasant humour as his lordship—

quænam ista jocandi sævitia? What! "to have no moral nor political objection" to enslaving a whole people? to incorporating them with a rival power, merely to punish the policy of their king? From all his involution of phrase and meaning one can only make out, that his lordship has been frightened by Russia and duped by Prussia. The pretensions of the first he owns alarming *even for the Russians:* the virtues of the latter make nothing too good to be given, "provided she asks for nothing!!!" .

LETTER XV.

Paris, May —.

MY DEAR SIR,

LET me intreat you to vote for peace. In the course of your long political life, you have had to give your suffrage on many most important questions, and your name has been found constantly amongst the advocates for religious and political freedom. The revolution war you never ceased to oppose, from the beginning to the end of that unjust and unfortunate struggle, in spite of the denunciations of enemies and the frowns of friends. You left father and mother to cleave to the good cause; nor, although that cause has appeared to you to have fallen into other hands than those by which it was upheld at the outset of your public life, is there to be found any relinquishment of those honourable principles which gave it the first claim to your early regard. You will pardon the impertinence of praise from one with whom duty and affection must supply the place of that approbation which, perhaps, it may appear no less decent to withhold than to feel.

My only motive for recurring to this topic is, that you may infer the character I cannot but attach to the question at present before your House, when I appeal to the tenor of such a public life, as a presumption that you cannot intend to support your friends, the ministers, in their warlike address to the Regent. I hear with surprise and grief, that a defection is expected from the ranks of opposition, and that even among the personal friends, the immediate disciples of Mr. Fox, there are some found who declare, that to the last ounce of gold, the last drop of blood, England is to struggle against the restored tyrant. Such patriots ought to be forgiven, as they know not what they do: though, until I see that they act upon some general principles entirely independent of the false premises assumed by the contrivers and supporters of the war, I must think there is something of haste in their conclusions, which not even the events hoped for by themselves will be able to justify. Those who think a war with France, in order to dethrone Napoleon, to be an inevitable evil, acknowledge the state of distress to which the

country is already reduced, and the improbability of any scheme of taxation being invented which will enable it to support the increasing burthens of the state beyond a limited time: the chancellor of the exchequer fixed it, I think, in one of his luminous speeches, to four years. Viewed as an excuse for a renewal of the income-tax, this contest may have many recommendations to that gentleman, and the sovereigns of congress were not more happy to rebrace their dissolving union by joining in the old common cause, than Mr. Vansittart may be to merge all partial discontents in one general calamity. In Paris they have been bold enough to insinuate, that the necessity of renewing the income-tax has no little share in the apparent determination to renew the war. But I shall say nothing of the pecuniary distresses of our country; you are much better acquainted with the details than myself; all I know is the grand total collected from the confessions of ministers themselves, who speak as if they were in the jaws of ruin, at the same time that they recommend the indefinite augmentation of our difficulties. So that no conclusion can be drawn but that

the political existence itself of England must appear not only menaced by, but incompatible with, the continuation of Napoleon on the throne of France. If we unknit all our own sinews, crack all our joints, in the convulsive effort, we must still keep hold of the fatal purpose, nor desist till we die in the agony of this our last grasp. You must think in England, then, that Napoleon, if suffered to remain in peace, will render himself no less formidable than he was during his former reign. To me it seems that nothing can restore him to a shadow of his ancient authority, except, perhaps, a decided and brilliant triumph over the allied arms, in a contest in which the people of France conceive themselves the injured party, and may, therefore, acquiesce in a splendid revenge. A state of peace, you say, must always be uncertain with such a man, and to maintain the treaty of Paris, whilst he reigns, would require a constant armament, and hostile preparations more intolerable than war itself. To me this seems like the giddy feeling, which forces a man to throw himself down a precipice for fear of falling. You think, then, that with Louis, or any other king on the throne, a peace would be permanent, or at least of a duration much greater than could be hoped for with Napoleon. You must, therefore, never

make peace; because sometime or the other you must renew the war—like Swift's footman, you say the boots will be dirty again. I repeat to you, however, that if the French remain at peace, the power of going to war will not be in the hands of Napoleon. The establishment of a constitutional government is inevitable; the elections for the chamber of representatives are carrying on at this moment with every chance of such a return being made as will secure a large majority to the independent party, and the patriots of 1789 it is expected will be predominant. The spirit of liberty is gone forth; to chain it down will be impracticable; and an assemblage of six hundred and twenty-nine persons of any condition or character, under the present circumstances, must be the actual masters of the French nation. I will not conceal the difficulties attending the choice of persons the best qualified for representing the nation. In the first place, the generality of the nobility in the provinces take every care to discredit the new chamber, and have succeeded so far, that several who have been chosen have refused to serve. Secondly, such is the base love of court distinctions, which the restoration of monarchical usages by the old imperial government has left amongst more than one class of people, that men, who

would think themselves honoured by a bit of ribbon at their button-holes, disdain to make any efforts to represent their countrymen. Thirdly, in some provinces the nobles are so suspected by the people, that such young men as belong to that body, and are very well qualified and willing to serve, are unable to obtain a seat in their own county; and, as a prejudice seems for the most part to prevail against strangers, such as have made the attempt elsewhere have generally failed. Several young persons, well known in Paris for their independence and their talents, have presented themselves to the electoral colleges, at a distance from the capital, but without success. I see, by the Moniteur, that the court would wish to discourage the ambition of such suspected patriots; for the prudence of the electoral colleges who have rejected them is held up to public applause and imitation. Another objection lies against the form of voting, which is by writing, without any *viva voce* application or rivalry between different candidates. The state of partial insurrection creates another difficulty, which, however, must soon be corrected upon the success of Napoleon; for in the Marseillois six members have been returned by thirteen electors, and in the Vendean departments no election has taken place. The court has not failed to make some efforts to se-

cure a portion of the representatives: thus the minister M. Regnault de St. Jean D'Angely has been twice returned; and there are other instances of what we should call ministerial nominations in the *maires* and *procureurs imperiaux* of their districts. Notwithstanding, however, all these objections, the constitutional party will have a decided majority; and the voice of such as have an attachment to the imperial person, or even government, will be lost in the cries of liberty and the nation. In more than one instance the old terrorists have been chosen; and it is a fact worth mentioning, that ——— has been elected in that very district in which he executed the most horrible vengeance recorded of those frightful times, by razing the town of ———, and exterminating the inhabitants. This choice has been carried partly by the propensity in favour of pure republicanism, and partly by the influence of the candidate, who, strange as it may appear, has for many years performed the duties and attained the reputation of the purest and most liberal benevolence. The honest portion of the king's chamber of deputies, whom we may call the constitutionalists, about sixty members, have been re-elected; and these, with La Fayette at their head, are expected to temper the violence of the more decided enemies of

despotism. There is a rumour, that the prisoner of Olmutz will be the president of the assembly, and Lucien Bonaparte (to whose arrival in France I find much more importance attached in England than in Paris) has also been named; but an article has appeared in the Independent, insisting upon the impropriety of such a choice. Lucien is now an imperial prince, and has obtained for his wife and children the dignities which Napoleon before refused to that refractory brother. He was denied his request even at the Emperor's return, but has succeeded at last—has accepted the grand *cordon*—is lodged in the palais royal, and forgotten. I heard him the other day recite an ode at the Institute, in defence of Homer, amidst the solemn silence of the members and the titters of the galleries. He has been elected to the chamber under the simple name of Lucien Bonaparte, which may show the spirit of the times; for, according to the constitution, he must have a seat amongst the peers, and such an election must have taken place in expectation that the said chamber would have no existence: and indeed, in defiance of the imperial will, many persons now assert the peers will be dropt, the Moniteur being entirely silent upon that head. The chamber, as it stands, is chiefly composed of

freeholders, manufacturers, advocates, and officers, and will be as fair a representation of the people, as, under the existing circumstances, it would be possible to assemble: it will, I repeat, be the mistress of France; and will not be the dupe, much less the instrument, of imperial despotism. If England continues at peace with France, the house of representatives, so far from encouraging Napoleon in any of his ambitious projects against her, will regard her as the friend, as the patron, of the rising liberties of their country. To her are directed the eyes of all liberal and enlightened Frenchmen. With more of sorrow than of anger they ask why she should refuse the incense of so many millions of disciples, willing to venerate her as the model of all their institutions, as the origin of all their happiness? why she should confine the light of freedom to her favoured regions, and condemn those who would infuse a portion of the sacred flame into the automata of slavery to the punishment of theft and sacrilege?

I beg you not to believe the stories reported in England of the jealousies entertained against our countrymen, and the ill usage heaped upon such as still remain in this place. The vast machine now put in motion solely by our government to crush and swallow up the hopes of

France, and to blot out her name from amongst the nations, might indeed justify such jealousies, and almost excuse such insults; but with the exception of one article, concluding with the famous prediction of Montesquieu, that England will perish as Rome and Carthage have perished, not even the journals have indulged in any tone but that of simple remonstrance; and the language of society, especially that immediately connected with the court, is such, although entirely political, as the saloons of St. James's Square might hear without resentment. Whilst, if your societies are like your journals, falsehood, and fanaticism, and rudeness, and ignorance, and rage, have obtained a credit and currency worthy of the Augusta Trinobantum, rather than of the British capital of the 19th century. An alliance between France and England at this present moment would, in all probability, be cemented by every principle of union which can give durability to a friendship between two nations. The efforts we have already made, and the preparations now on foot, as they would show that no motive of fear had withheld our hand, so would they create in our neighbours a sentiment of gratitude; and the conviction, that we had given up our suspicions, acknowledged, at first view, to be justifiable, and yielded up the

right which we might pretend to a personal quarrel with Napoleon, from love of justice and of freedom, and of the happiness of a whole nation, would be certain to command their respect and esteem. The imitation of our institutions would assimilate the manners and the tastes of the two nations, and their ancient rivalry be lost in the affection of the master and the duty of the disciple: nor would the advantage fail to be mutual; for, whilst they attempted to copy us, we might resolve to reform ourselves; and, taught by their example, be at last persuaded, that the only chance for a virtuous and permanent administration of a commonwealth, is to divide the controlling power amongst the greatest possible portion of those who are interested in its preservation and well-being.

Then would the emulation between us be confined to the arts of peace, and the increasing freedom and power of the respective peoples disarming the ambition, would prevent the quarrels of their governments. The principles of independence would not be circumscribed by the limits of these nations; they would spread from the Rhine to the Danube, from the Danube to the Vistula, and in their rapid and bloodless progress reform the Christian world.

The union of two such commonwealths would

be so commanding, and the reassertion of the rights of human nature so irresistible and secure, that monarchs themselves would silently submit, and consent, without a struggle, to surrender the happiness and freedom of their subjects into their own hands.

Could you be assured that such would or even ought to be the happy effect of aiding the experiment now making in France, you would not vote for war, for you are not one of the friends to "the ancient social system," nor are you one of those who think with Lord Somers, that the first of the two nations which loses its antipathy to the other will become a province of its ancient rival. You have no animosity to France. You think, as the allies pretended to think, that it is necessary for the happiness of Europe that she should be a great and independent state. Let me ask you, then, what you propose by the war? Would you wish to prevent the establishment of a constitutional government in France?—Certainly not. But it is known to all in France that such an event will be the consequence of a peace. You may say that you prefer the establishment of such a government under other auspices. So would I, so would France herself; but would you, for the sake of a name, of a form, to gratify a personal pique of a minister or a king, defer to a

future and uncertain period the acquirement of that happiness which now appears within the grasp of this unfortunate people, and employ the interval in the massacre and misery of millions?

You do not seriously think that the best way to give rational freedom to France is to crush, by entire conquest, every existing principle of animation, and, having reduced the mass to inactivity, mold it into such a shape, and infuse into it such a new life, as may render its resurrection inoffensive to the conquerors.

Suppose Napoleon already defeated and dethroned, and the combined armies at the gates of Paris, do you think the allies will allow the French to fill the vacant throne? Will not they pretend that the chamber of representatives is the tool of the usurper, and that its voice cannot be heard in the election of a monarch? Will not that chamber be dispersed, perhaps at the point of the bayonet? If you do consider that such would be the consequence of the total discomfiture of the imperialists, you cannot, you must not vote for that war, of which the most fortunate consequence proposed by those who consider it necessary would be productive of injustice on the part of England, and of incalculable calamities to France.

You are too fair to look with distrust upon

the preparations making in this country, which have been occasioned solely by the threatened hostilities of all the rest of Europe, and to which the nation on no other pretence would consent; although I see that some amongst you have the excessive boldness to impute these efforts *for actual existence* to the *ambition* of the Emperor and the empire. It is because you think the late revolution in France a mere military movement that you think it should be opposed. In whatever manner the throne was recovered by Napoleon, there is no doubt that he is now in possession of the will of the people. You say, *the dregs of the people*—you may give what name you please to the great majority of Frenchmen, but you will not alter the fact; and as for the classification of natures now in fashion, I may be not contradicted in saying that these dregs are, it is possible, the best part of the nation. Let me remind you that Burnet does not hesitate to call the people who kept down the Jacobites, in the times of difficulty and danger to English liberty, *the rabble*, who, whilst there were only 7000 troops in the island, when Lord Torrington's fleet had been beaten at Beachy Head, and all our coasts were insulted by the French, enabled, by their zeal and affection for the government, ay, by mobbing the Jacobite country gentlemen, Queen Mary and her ministers to

stand their ground against the traitors in England, whilst William was opposing the armies of the tyrant in Ireland. The French armies, numerous as they are, and devotedly as they will fight, may be beaten or overwhelmed—Paris may be occupied by the conquerors—and Louis, as before, may enter with their baggage waggons. The imperial family—their adherents and soldiers—the representatives of the people—may be driven from their posts; they may finish their career on the scaffold or in the squares: but, having fashioned all these events to your will, what will you do with conquered France? You think she will fall quietly under the paternal sway of Louis XVIII., and accept liberty from him and his charter. Such an acquiescence is impossible, because incompatible with every passion of the human breast, both those which are vicious and those which wear the semblance of virtue; and I feel assured that the victory of the allies would diminish the partisans of the Bourbons, although it might give a loose to the fury of such of them as remain attached to the cause. Even were that sovereign and his family disposed to reoccupy the throne with no principle of vengeance and without resorting to any reaction, and fully bent upon the establishment of a constitutional government (which I cannot allow),

would the seventy departments of France, who now look upon the Bourbons as the principal source of all the sufferings with which they are threatened, understand or accept the benefits even of freedom from such hands? If left to defend themselves, the king, every member of the royal family, every noble, every priest, every royalist, would be butchered within a fortnight after the second restoration. Foreign armies might, indeed, protect the sovereign and his adherents from the hate and the vengeance, though, perhaps, not from the despair of his people; and, in order to fulfil mock promises, mock forms might be invented, and mock parliaments convoked, which would cajole the patriot millions as long as fear should force them to shut their eyes. Undeceived as to the possibility of keeping Louis on the throne, and wearied out with the care and the expense of the armies necessary to secure the crown and person of the king, the allied sovereigns might at last resolve upon the dismemberment of the kingdom—the safest, they might say, the only reasonable guarantee for the peace of that country or of Europe.

Either the dismemberment or the subjection of France to a perpetually standing army of foreigners must be the effect of the forcible deposition of Napoleon, unless the Bourbons

should fatally persuade themselves and their allies that they can stand alone, which would be the signal of a second revolution not less sanguinary than the first. Can you wish for the accomplishment of either of these consequences? Under the two first suppositions the cause of liberty would be retarded for an age (it can only be retarded;) and the latter event humanity and the experience of our own times forbid us to consider desirable upon any expectation of the advantages which it might finally produce.

I should wish to ask you, what would be the probable effects of the overthrow of the French people (for so it must be called) and the annihilation of their present hopes of independence, in England, and whether you do not suppose it possible that such a signal triumph of the cause of kings, on the continent, might be dangerous to our own liberties? Might not the admirers of the ancient social system of Europe, justified by the general defeat of the contrary principles, endeavour to adapt that system to the British nation, and to abolish the tedious, embarrassing, discredited forms of our government, in favour of the more simple, vigorous, and now victorious institutions of pure monarchy? You do not think that portion of the ministry with which you are more inti-

mately connected and acquainted to be capable of such a project; and perhaps you may acquit Lord Castlereagh himself of so vile a design. It is, however, too clear that for some years the power of the crown, or the *vizierat* (it is the same), has been increasing in a reduplicating ration, and that amongst the other sacrifices to which our long struggles have obliged us to consent, that of a due jealousy and suspicion of court influence has been not the least important. Each succeeding ministry has made a demand, not only for our men and our money, but our confidence; and unfortunately the exigencies of the times have appeared to justify the representative portion of the nation in acceding liberally to these grants, and in confirming them. The phrase of strengthening the hands of the executive has been so frequently used, that it is now resorted to as an excuse for measures already taken, instead of for measures proposed, and may soon, perhaps, become obsolete as the power of the crown shall be plenary, and no strength be left in any other hands. Such infinite use has been made of pity and terror, in purging the passions of patriotism during all discussions relative to republican and imperial France, that I feel convinced Lord Castlereagh or his brother ministers might carry any measure, however arbitrary, by contriving to connect it with

their opposition to the Jacobins and Napoleon, and the little impartial reflection and unshaken attachment to the principles which placed the house of Brunswick on the throne, now left in the house of commons, might be lost in the delirium of a final triumph over these terrific monsters. The vast increase and influence of our military establishment, and the creation of a kind of court nobility out of that gallant body, which has disjointed independent society, and attracted a part of it round the person of the sovereign, distinguished by the badges of favoritism, may be looked upon as national innovations which have arisen perhaps from the misfortunes of the times, more than from any settled purpose, but which it becomes every honest man to discourage, by striking at the root of the evil, in a constant demand for peace, in preference to any war of experiment. Such is the view that those Englishmen, who are on this spot, must take of the threatened contest, that if the armies of Wellington and Napoleon meet in the field, I should tremble at an English victory. I could receive no congratulation on a triumph in a bad cause, and one which might eventually endanger the individual independence of my countrymen. Do we want any accession to the glory of our arms? are there any disgraces to repair? any uncertainties to decide?

Amongst the topics employed by our bolder orators, I have not heard that this has found a place. Let me, then, again implore you to vote for peace; or, at least, not to vote for the war.

Let me, in concluding, intreat you also, whilst you examine the preceding dissuasives, to forget the quarter whence they have been directed to your notice; lest you should discover an inversion of the order of nature, in your taking that which it is your privilege to give, and in my presuming to offer when I should be anxious only to receive advice.

Believe me your most dutiful
and affectionate ——

LETTER XVI.

Paris, May 29.

Mr. P——— is just arrived from London with the newspapers of the 25th. There are ninety-two honest men in the house of commons, who will redeem the English character; and, whatever may be the event of the war, now, as it appears, inevitable, leave some retreat upon which the friends of freedom will fall back, and find consolation and repose.

The minority in the peers is respectable for that house; but its respectability has not surprised me, for had not God, for some strong purpose, steeled the hearts of that assembly, the speech of Lord Grey had met with the full success which the eloquence, and the cause, and the character, of that noble-minded person gave him a right to expect. The commanding voice, the graceful action, the upright air, of the powerful orator, to us are lost; but his truths divine have happily reached us, and the French confess, that liberty has in England still an advocate, whom neither fear nor corruption

have been able to silence or to control. A gentleman, just returned to Paris, heard this splendid display of honest oratory, and owns himself to have been so affected, that he gives up the cause for lost, being persuaded, that if that effort failed to carry conviction to every breast, no power of words can hope a more happy effect. I fear he is right—" if they hear not Moses and the prophets." Lord Grenville, when scholars and statesmen do not abound, is indeed a loss, and a loss that might have been foreseen. The author of the letter to the Directory could hardly be reconciled to his republican correspondents; but the schism, if it lasts, may not be unproductive of good; it may remove all obstacles between the people and their former chiefs, and, correcting the coyness and suspicion of either party, restore to the long disjointed opposition its original union and legitimate force. I see that Lord ——— and Mr. ——— are gone—*vile damnum*. But Mr. Grattan!!! If the English whigs had no other charge to make against the returned Emperor than that he has brought one of their first characters to an unfortunate end, and has closed a life of enlightened and protracted patriotism by a lamentable scene of unaccountable perverseness, surely they would have so much cause to complain of Napoleon, that they ought never to

be suspected of attachment to his person or his cause.

There must be some mistake in the report of his speech—"*method in his madness, and madness* "*in his method!!!*" But however he might have been carried away by the feelings of the moment, the enthusiasm of nonsense could not have been communicated to the orator himself; and the applause of the treasury bench must soon have made him, like Phocion, suspect he had said some silly thing. Whence he got his eloquence we need not ask—there is something not to be mistaken in the taste of either of the thousand rills that flow from the harmonious springs of the Irish Helicon—but his facts, where could he have procured them? who has amused himself at the pitiful sport of playing upon a patriot venerable by his talents and his age? If I mistake not, he and his family have been lately in this country; but if he had swallowed, at second hand, the crude accounts of a Bourbonist subprefect of the south of France, he could not have "full fairly given to the house" a mass so indigested and indigestible.

Of all the extraordinary things in this extraordinary specimen, the most romantic is the sketch of the progress of Napoleon from Cannes to Paris, of which (could I change countries with this distinguished man) I should say, that

if it had been such a progress, it would have been no progress at all. The apostrophe, *see him at Grenoble!* appeared to me particularly grand and daring; for had any English member of parliament seen him there, and had he, as a piece of pleasantry, resolved upon an *œconomic* account of Napoleon's reception at that place, no distortion nor fiction of facts could have formed a more complete contrast between realities and representations, than the rhetorical memoir of that event. In this instance facts are dealt with, as some dialecticians choose to treat arguments, according to the old phrase of taking the bull by the horns, for the strongest and most prominent feature of Napoleon's entry into his former dominions is laid hold of, and being first rendered inoffensive, little is to be feared from other less dangerous opponents. The battery is not only carried by storm, but all the guns are now made to point the other way. You have already seen what really did happen at Grenoble; and I shall only add, that the triumphant welcome which the Emperor there received from the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood, has made a subject for one of the four common prints representing the most singular and notorious events attending his return to the throne,

I feel inclined to transmit one of these prints as a comment upon, and reply to, this harangue. I presume that you yourself want no other notice than what has been already taken of it; and that it is unnecessary to add, that, from the beginning to the end of it, there is not one single representation, which, to those who are acquainted with the truth, can excite much less astonishment than the adventure at Grenoble, such as it appeared when adapted for the use of the serene audience of St. Stephen's.

I see Mr. Grattan quotes Mr. Burke, fixing upon that portion of his writings, which, to my mind, is the most unhappy justification he could have found for the encomium he bestows upon the political foresight of that great man. If there be in works of authority any eccentricities, any paradoxes, any doctrines of a doubtful character and tendency, any of that Beliac eloquence which makes the worse appear the better reason, and which passion, or perverseness, or playfulness, may have produced, such portion of the author is sure to be found more frequently in modern quotations than the honest acknowledged truths with which the better part of his writings may abound. Folly and vice want an excuse much oftener than wisdom and virtue stand in need of precedent. So it has happened with Mr. Burke: the ravings of the

alarmist are become almost common-places in the mouths of our present statesmen, to whom the nobler lessons of the oppositionist are scarcely known. Certainly there are to be found in his oratorical armoury weapons to equip a Quixote, as well as a patriot: but it might be expected that Mr. Grattan should rather have selected one of the solid swords of freedom, than the brittle lances of knight errantry.

Weaving it in his own myrtles, he might have flourished the sacred steel with peculiar grace. Instead of citing authorities to justify national ambition, and a thirst of glory and of blood, he might, from the brighter pages of the same author, have illustrated apprehensions more becoming his character, of the probable consequences of engaging in an unhallowed struggle against the independence of peoples—and when pleading the cause of other nations, might have warned us of the danger of our own, in the noble remonstrance directed against the delusive love of glory, a favourite passion of the Englishmen of the present age. "What, gracious sovereign! is the empire of America to us, or the empire of the world, if we lose our own liberties? We deprecate this last of evils. We deprecate the effect of the doctrines, which must support and countenance

"the government over conquered English-
"men.

"As it will be impossible long to resist the
"powerful and equitable arguments in favour
"of the freedom of these unhappy people,
"that are to be drawn from the principle of
"our own liberty; attempts will be made,
"attempts have been made, to ridicule and
"argue away this principle; and to inculcate
"into the minds of your people other maxims
"of government and other grounds of obedi-
"ence, than those which have prevailed at,
"and since, the glorious revolution. By de-
"grees, these doctrines, by being convenient,
"may grow prevalent. The consequence is
"not certain; but a general change of princi-
"ple rarely happens among a people, without
"leading to a change of government."

This language of truth and patriotism, which I glow to read and tremble to write, was addressed to the king to dissuade him from "AN "ATTEMPT TO DISPOSE OF THE PROPERTY OF A "WHOLE PEOPLE WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT. A "grievance as simple in its nature, and as level "to the most ordinary understanding, as it is "powerful in affecting the most languid pas-"sions."

This powerful strain called forth to control

a former spirit of aggression, would have lost none of its force if applied by such an orator as Mr. Grattan, to the representatives of the people, as the counterpoise to the names of Wellington and victory, which threw such a preponderance against the scale of common sense: and I would tell that gentleman, that it is not the foreboding of a discontented mind that induces me to fear that these words will ring in our ears till we can distinguish no other sound, and shall be no less deaf to the voice which warns us against the attacks of internal tyranny, than we are now to that which dissuades us from purchasing military glory at the hazard of destroying the liberty of a great and injured nation, and of establishing other rights than the will of the people, as the lawful basis of sovereign power. I should have no hope from an adroit and able sovereign, who might know how to employ the propensities of his subjects, and to work upon that commencing "change of principle which may lead to a change of government," and who would sacrifice all minor motives to one settled object of domestic usurpation. But as it is, little jealousies and frivolous favouritisms may protect us, and keep the Duke field-marshal without the pale and the projects of the court. His brother, by his vote for peace, has merited the eternal grati-

tude of his countrymen, and has, considering common prejudices, stood forward as boldly, and performed as notable an action in opposition to a national injustice, as the victorious opposer of French tyranny beyond the Pyrenees. The Marquis of Wellesley himself, with all his extensive views of general policy, cannot, without a personal acquaintance with the state of things in France, be aware how very justly and wisely he has decided in refusing to lend his name to the fruitless project of making a war upon principles, which, like Virgil's oak, have shot roots as deep below, as they have spread branches high above, the surface; and which, though some may think they tend, like those roots, to Tartarus itself, will never be plucked up by force, but though they may be levelled with the soil, will in their due time reappear, and overshadow the earth.

I find there are many of our public men who avow, in spite of our exception to the 8th article of the treaty of the 25th of March, that they would make war upon the jacobins as they call them, rather than the Emperor of France. I have before told you, that I believe this to be true, and that the real dread of our court and ministry is the establishment, not of Napoleon, but of a monarchical republic, in which the real national representatives should

be the controlling power, and every institution be declaratory of, and contributive to, the sovereignty of the people. The whole of the foreign policy of our cabinet seems to have had for its great object the perpetual insignificance of popular interests and wishes, when set in opposition to the *wishes of the principal powers of Europe*, or at least to that *concurrence* of their wishes, by which the King of Sardinia took possession of Genoa.

It must be confessed we have been exceedingly complaisant to the *Powers*, as well as to the personages who come next in the scale of Satanic greatness—those *Virtues* the King of Wirtemberg and the King of Hanover, and have wished away the liberties of nations, as heartily as the best of them; it cannot therefore be a subject of surprise, that we should be enraged at the audacious attempt made to break the enchantment, and prevent us from putting on our Fortunatus caps, when we next want

"To buy estates, or fetch and carry kings."

If Louis XVIII. is to cease to reign, merely because he is not beloved by his people, all our state deeds will be worth nothing as conveyances, and the names of Clancarty, Stewart, and Cathcart, be just as valuable as the red wax and green ferret at the bottom of the bond. A great effort must therefore be made to establish

the validity of the present transfers, and the right and title of the powers to similar bargains for the soil of [illegible]endom, and the featherless two-legged animals on its surface. It was entirely inconsistent with this reestablishment of ancient principles, that a single revolutionary king should retain his throne; notwithstanding the fact of his being imposed upon his people, and being besides the brother of a tyrant; might perhaps have been expected to have weighed with the congress to be somewhat more favourable to Murat than circumstances have proved them to have been. Of all the countries which had to deplore the consummation of the wishes of the world by the fall of Napoleon, Italy was the first which recovered from the temporary delusion of self-congratulation, into which she had by that event been at first surprised. She had felt but little the weight of the iron crown, and recognised in her subjection to France rather a union of interests and a claim to protection than any of the conditions of servitude. She was in possession of a court, an army, a civil administration of her own, and might be said to enjoy the paternal sway of a national sovereign, in the authority of the Viceroy Eugene. Her kingdom began to acquire that vigour, that respectability, that public spirit, and many of those characteristics of absolute independence, which, it is probable, would

have at last procured that finishing excellence itself.

The dethronement of Napoleon was thought to be the signal of emancipation, and the cry of liberty was raised for a moment; but she soon found "the luckless dower of her charms" in the hands, not of liberators, but of spoilers, who treated her with the vengeance and implacability of a restored and foreign master. Her arms and her arts were to be crushed beneath the yoke of the despotic patrons of ignorance and superstition, and all her long-cherished hopes of union and independence blasted for ever. Seeing that she was thrown into the common stock of the congress, and that her redemption seemed hopeless, she regretted the golden chains of the Emperor and King, and cast many a look of dejection and despair toward the rocks of Elba; and, at a signal from the conqueror of Austria, would have fled to arms. Napoleon must be supposed aware of this disposition in his favour; but it does not appear that he combined a revolt in Italy with his attempt upon France. The advance of Murat and his army, although the treatment he had received from the congress might justify any conduct in him, so far from being preconcerted with Napoleon, was in direct opposition to the wishes of the court of Paris; and I have never ceased to hear

it deprecated in this place, even when it was supposed the King of Naples had defeated his enemies. Not only was that movement ridiculed as precipitate and ill contrived, but asserted possitively to be the consequence of a fatal jealousy, which induced the king to anticipate that liberation of Italy, which would otherwise be reserved for his imperial brother-in-law. When the unfortunate step was taken, courier after courier was dispatched from Paris, to advise a retreat, and an immediate adoption of measures wholly defensive, as a proper counterpart of the negotiations which were offered by Napoleon to the allies, and of which eighty thousand troops, under the command of his relation, would have afforded a powerful persuasive. The advices either did not reach the Neapolitan army, or reached it too late, or were not attended to; and the Italians, who saw no sign of concert between the king and him in whom all their hopes must finally centre, in spite of the proclamations addressed to them, and in spite of their own propensities, remained, except in Bologna, tranquil spectators of the contest between the Neapolitans and the Austrians. The signal and incomprehensible defeat of the former was no encouragement to insurrection; and I believe that few swords were drawn for Murat by the friends of Italian independence. He has

fallen, as you have learnt; and, as far as he is himself concerned, has fallen unregretted in France, where he is so far from being considered as an ally of the Emperor, that the friends of the court accuse him as the earliest deserter, and a continued traitor to his brother's cause. Some reports say he is now at St. Cloud, others at the gulf of Juan; but the imperial generals aver that he has been tried enough: and I heard one of them, the other day, express a hope that he might not be put again to command the French cavalry. He is, indeed, not to be pitied; on the contrary, we must look on him with an evil eye, as having furnished arguments and exultation to the enemies of freedom. The integrity of his power at this moment, together with the known inclinations of the Italians, would have thrown a considerable weight into the scale of the peoples against that of the kings of Europe; but the fall of the last reigning sovereign of the new dynasty is so decided a triumph of the policy of the Bourbons and the wishes of the principal powers of Europe, that the French begin their battle in the very face of victory. Great use will be made by the patrons of the ancient social system in England of this event: the instability of new kings, and the superiority of legitimate dynasties, will not fail to be frequently in their mouths: but

what I most regret is, that the representations which the emissaries of Murat have spread both here and in our own country, relative to the state of thinking amongst the Italians, their love of freedom, and their impatience of their present subjection, will now be denied as false, and as contrived merely to serve the purposes of an ambitious upstart; an imputation which will also throw discredit upon, and be made applicable to, similar assertions respecting the wishes and feelings of France. But the fact, though discouraging, does not decide the question; the salvation was not expected from the side of Naples, and even the intelligent agents of our cabinet cannot conceal from themselves that the dangerous attachment to French innovations is perhaps stronger at this moment in Italy than when the power of Napoleon was at its height. It is inconceivable to me, that those who allow that there is a general persuasion of the prevalence of these principles amongst the people of Europe, and are themselves sensible of such prevalence, should think that all the cabinets of all the kings in Christendom can withstand or change the tendency of public opinion, or that the general bent of the age can be permanently affected, or receive an opposite turn, by the fall of one man or the triumph of another. Lord Castlereagh may be inclined to own and boast that

his course is contrary to the moral motion of the earth, as that of Apollo was supposed to be to the rotation of the empyreum—

> " Nitor in adversum, nec me, qui cætera, vincit
> " Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi."

But his lordship may recollect, that the father of Phaeton employed this as an argument to dissuade his child from an effort fatal to all but the sun, and which the progress of reason has since discovered to have been nothing but an idle vaunt in the mouth even of Apollo himself. *The opinion of the age is irresistible.* It is true, as Mr. Benjamin Constant observes, that this opinion has a sort of representative, without whom it cannot acquire its full force, and upon whose character and fortune the manifestation and peculiar development of its influence must, therefore, in some measure, depend. But so little does *the man of the age* himself control or direct this opinion, that his whole success depends upon his constant inclination to that bias which he originally received from the impulse common to all his cotemporaries. Any direct and continued deviation from the track stops his own career; but does not alter the nature and tendency of the ground itself. And, notwithstanding the saying of Cæsar, he and all other heroes have found rather than made their way to greatness. As long as Napoleon

rode buoyant upon the current, his triumph was never even in the balance; but when he attempted to carry the stream higher than the level of the original fountain, he was indebted to his own genius and exertions for a temporary exaltation; but the first obstacle, the first remission of his toil, put an end to his career; the waters rushed rapidly backwards to their natural bed, and left him on the rocks. It was not the cause but the man that fell, for deserting that cause, which has proved itself to have survived his ruin, by enabling him to return; and which, whether the misfortune or misconduct of him or any other individual should retard its triumph, will at last prevail. The allied sovereigns may think this *spirit of the age* more easily overthrown, because it is represented by one instead of many, and doubtless a republic would have better stood the trial than a monarchy, which does not so much concentrate the power as concentrate the point of attack, and reduces the game in appearance to a single stake. In 1793 there were thirteen French armies in the field, commanded by as many generals, by the rivality of each of whom the republic might triumph, though it could not be ruined by his defeat. When the fate of France depended upon an Emperor and a grand army, an individual accident was decisive. The same objection is good

against the imperial commonwealth of this day, and is, in fact, acknowledged by the constitutionalists, who tremble that the fortunes of their country should be entrusted to a single hand. But these fortunes, they proclaim, may be retrieved from any calamity; and they commence the contest not so much with an expectation of present victory as with a resolution not to be discouraged by misfortune. It has been proposed by more than one writer at this time to defer the business of constituting the commonwealth until a period of tranquillity, and, in the mean time, to entrust the dictatorship to Napoleon, with a generous confidence, which may permit of the absolute, unshackled exertion of all his genius and of the means of France. For this purpose the authors of several pamphlets have advised the immediate prorogation of the chamber of representatives, when it meets, and a temporary restoration of the imperial power in all its plenitude. This measure is objected to by a portion of the constitutionalists, who are suspicious of Napoleon, and would not trust him with victory, but, notwithstanding these jealousies, it would, I doubt not, be adopted by his patriot ministers, were they not convinced that by the conduct which they at present pursue the greatest possible exertions are made, and the largest force raised from the people, who

are taught, by every act of government, that the cause for which they fight is their own. In fact, it is allowed that no efforts of the most absolute despotism could do more than is now done for the defence of the empire; and that being the case, any postponement of the benefits which the return of Napoleon is to confer upon the nation would be of no use, even if it did not lend a handle to the suspicions of his subjects and the accusations of his enemies. At the same time, also, that the assembling of the legislative power gives to the people a confidence in the government, it likewise commits a vast portion of the population and a certain quantity of the talents and rank of the country to the support of the new order of things, and in some measure provides against the objections before made to the hazards of an individual command, securing a retreat for the people, and a refuge, in any extremities, for the cause itself.

You may conceive that it is with no little anxiety that the eyes of all are turned towards the meeting of the chamber, which is not yet fixed for any named day. The lords are not yet hinted at, and it is rumoured that either there will be no chamber of peers, or that they will not be hereditary: the whole will depend upon the representatives, and I see that a writer of an address to the deputies declares it as

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his opinion "that their first decree should be "to expel for ever from the French empire all "the nobles who have done nothing for their "country:" others directly oppose the embodying of the aristocracy. But there are not wanting those who endeavour to recommend the constitution, such as it has been proposed by Napoleon. I have told you that the author of the history of the Italian republics has published five articles in the Moniteur, and Mr. de Constant is preparing a short treatise, which is to serve, I presume, as a kind of manual for the members of the new parliament. As to the Champ de Mai, which was fixed for the 26th of this month, it seems it is deferred. Your friend L—— said to me yesterday—"Good "God! if such a thing was put off in England "in such a manner." The electoral colleges have some of them arrived at Paris, and have been presented to the Emperor, which seems useless and suspicious. The building for the ceremony in the Champ de Mars is also in a state of forwardness, but there are many who still say that the building will be the only portion of this project carried into effect—in other words, there will be no such assembly. A total secrecy is observed relative to the measures of government, but, as the war is inevitable, there are daily reports of the immediate departure of

Napoleon for one of the armies, but for which of them it is not yet said. The Duke of Wellington is generally his allotted antagonist, but a little coxcombry was shewn in a paper of a day or two ago, which named a lieutenant-general as a competent opponent for his grace. An officer of rank observed to me on this occasion—"*Il "fera très bien y aller lui-même.*"

Visiting an aide-de-camp of the Emperor, I found him employed mapping in detail the country on the Belgian frontier, and was asked by him whether a separation of the Prussian and English armies, and a rapid march upon Brussels, would not surprise our politicians in England. "We can beat Blucher first, and "then," added he, smiling, "we shall try your "Wellington. No one doubts the undaunted "bravery of English soldiers, but the loss of "20,000 men would make the people of Lon-"don look a little pale. You are rather sparing of "your own blood, though I cannot say that you "care about that of your friends." The general was right, I thought, in the former part of his remark, and as to the latter, I presume he had been lately reading the comparative valuation of flesh and blood made by Lord Castlereagh in the house of commons, on the 24th, when he set down an Englishman at from sixty to seventy pounds sterling, but assured his friends

and the public that he had bargained for the continental creature of the same species and requisite pugnacious properties, at eleven pounds two shillings a head, and would sell them to his countrymen at prime cost.

A mighty merchant—and his trade was man.

LETTER XVII.

Paris, May 30.

In my last letter I mentioned the name of Murat, and told you that not only his attempt upon Italy was unconnected with the project of Napoleon, but was regarded here with an evil eye: nevertheless, it is not to be supposed but that the court has felt an interest in the success of his projects, which might have disarmed at least one of the enemies of France. The reply made in the Moniteur to the attack on the honour and good faith of the late King of Naples by Lord Castlereagh will have informed you of this; but I doubt whether the defence of Murat would have been undertaken, had it not been for the sake of exposing the honesty of the Bourbon government, and the gullibility of our secretary of state, whom I believe to be the first minister that ever adduced a forged letter, and, let me add, a private family letter, as an argument in favour of a war against a friendly power.

After the complete exposure of these impudent fabrications in the Moniteur, it is astonishing to me that so little has been made of

the matter in England. You may be sure I availed myself of the invitation given to any English gentleman present at Paris to examine the minutes and other documents upon which the forgery was formed. On the 23d of this month Mr. L—— and myself went to the archives, and were there shown the paper in question by the Duke of Bassano and Mr. Joan. This latter gentleman was cabinet secretary to the Emperor in his former reign, and holds the same situation at present. It was he who took down, from Napoleon's own mouth, the minutes made use of to fabricate the pretended letters; and it was by mere accident, that, reading Lord Castlereagh's speech and the contained correspondence, he recollected, by the remarkable phrase *pisser dessus*, that he had written down such words at the order of Napoleon, but not at the imputed time. He thus led to a research in that strong box which was left so unaccountably by M. de Blacas at the hotel of the king's household, and which contained, besides many materials for ministerial forgery, details of all the machinations of the French princes since the court of Coblentz, with the names of their agents in France. The Emperor, on the discovery of these papers, ordered all such as compromised individuals to be immediately burnt, excepting only those which

were immediately connected with affairs of state. It is now known and indeed confessed in England, that one of the principal objects of the late Bourbon ministry was to dispossess Murat of Naples. Lord Castlereagh, by his speech, shows that there was an original inclination in himself to serve his cause at congress against that ministry; and I was not surprised when you told me, in one of your letters, that an agent of Murat's in London had made to our government the offer of 80,000 men, to be disposed of as we should point out, and not to be paid until the troops had quitted the Neapolitan territory; and that Lord Liverpool had manifested no little hesitation, and even alarm, praying more than once this agent not to send off his letter to the Neapolitan court before he had given to the English cabinet sufficient time for reflection. They were aware in Paris of this transaction, which has not added to the popularity of Murat. The documents first shown to us were the original minutes of the Emperor's real letters in Mr. Joan's handwriting; they were written on the right half of sheets folded in the manner of official papers. The passages left out in the citations of Lord Castlereagh had been marked with red chalk for the Emperor's inspection. We saw the letter dated Fontainbleau, January 24, 1813,

addressed to the Queen of Naples, of which these words, occurring after the first sentence—"Your husband is very brave on the field of "battle; but he is weaker than a woman or a "monk when he does not see the enemy: he "has no moral courage"—were made use of in framing M. de Blacas' letter*, dated Nangis, the 17th of February; and written, said Lord Castlereagh, at an epoque when Napoleon did not despair of success, and when he treated Murat *en maître*. The actual letter began, "The "king quitted the army the 16th," which words were left out by M. de Blacas, as they would have shown the letter could not have applied to the assumed date and time at Nangis. We next read Napoleon's letter, dated Fontainbleau, January 26, 1813, which begins thus, "*Je ne parle pas du mécontentement de la con-* "*duite que vous avez tenue depuis mon départ de* "*l'armée,*" and which is conceived in the strongest terms against Murat, does treat him like a valet, tells him to *look to his crown, to take this warning, which shall be the last*, and not to think that the lion is dead, and that *on peut pisser dessus*. It was necessary that M. de Blacas should make this letter pass for one written after the battles of the 11th and 12th

* The letters being handed to Lord Castlereagh by M. de Blacas, I call them his—whether forged by him or Talleyrand is immaterial.

of March, 1814, in Champagne. Hence the terrible mutilations and additions found in his falsification read by Lord Castlereagh, and ending *gardez votre parole*, as if Murat had at that time given his word to Napoleon, that his alliance with his enemies was but forced and temporary, and that he would soon show his real intentions and good-will to his brother-in-law. The actual letter contains no such expressions; but is full, as I said above, of the coarsest abuse, which, if one could suspect the present French ministry of any forgery, one could not think they would have so little regard for the character of their master as to assign for his composition. The third letter, dictated by Napoleon, and taken down by Mr. Joan, was dated Compiegne, August 30, 1811; and was likewise conceived in language of considerable asperity, some of which is copied verbatim in the forgery. The Duke of Bassano told us, that, some time before the commencement of the Russian war, Napoleon had discerned in Murat a disinclination to furnish his contingent of 12,000 men; and that he, the duke, had received repeated orders to write to the king on that subject in the strongest language. Murat returned no answer to the duke's letter, but corresponded directly with Napoleon, which at last incensed the Emperor, and induced him to use an expression in his letter left out by Bla-

cas; and telling him to correspond, for the future, only with his minister, and write no more to him. You must have observed by what adroitness the addition of the words *at Ancona*, in the third letter, dated March 7, communicated, though not *read* to parliament by Lord Castlereagh, so completely alters the sense of the real sentence, which was not used in 1814 as pretended, but in 1811—"I shall see by "your conduct [at Ancona] if your heart is truly "French." M. de Blacas did not put any date or year to this third falsification; but by the mutilations and additions, wished to make it tally with March 7, 1814, to which time Lord Castlereagh applies it as a proof, that Murat was to show at *Ancona* that his heart was truly French, in spite of all Napoleon's suspicions and his own declarations to the allies. The falsification of these letters is the clumsiest forgery ever hazarded. We asked the Duke of Bassano how M. de Blacas could have been induced to insert scraps of actual correspondence, the existence and examination of which might disprove the imposition, instead of forging the whole:—he said, that the latter would have been the better measure of the two; that the Emperor would have been much embarrassed by such a procedure, as he would only have to deny the

letters to have been written, and oppose his word to that of Blacas; that he could only account for the present scheme by supposing the *count* was blinded by security and impudence, and a wish to be sure of imitating Napoleon's private style, by actually taking some of his phrases. Mr. Joan added, that he thought the latter was the real motive; as, indeed, any one at all accustomed to that style would never mistake any other for it. We remarked, that the boldness was the greater, as the original letters taken from the actual minutes must be in the hands of Murat, who might expose the forgery: to which the duke replied, that when M. de Blacas communicated his forgeries to Lord Castlereagh, he did not expect they would be published; or, if he did, he considered the King of Naples would be beaten and lost before the discovery. At the same time that the falsified minutes were shown to us, we were presented with the minutes of fabricated correspondence, cited by Lord Castlereagh, written in the hand of the Abbé Fleuriel, cabinet secretary for 19 years to Louis XVIII., with which we compared the original minutes. We had only the word of the duke for the Abbé's hand-writing; but Lord Castlereagh's citations were sufficient for our purpose, even without the Abbé's copy.

The internal evidence renders the deductions of the Moniteur of the 14th of May inevitable. In the month of January, 1815, Mr. de Blacas wished to convince Lord Wellington, that Murat was a traitor to the allies; for this purpose he sends him certain papers, which the duke reads, and returns, on the 4th of January, an answer like that of Pilate—he found nothing against Murat. The duke's note we saw in a hand-writing, which my companion said "he would attest to be that of his grace," and which I knew was written on the paper used by the English foreign office. The note is inserted in the Moniteur of the 14th, textually, even with the trifling neologism in the opening sentence. Mr. de Blacas, seeing the object had failed, was to find some other means of inculpating Murat. On the 4th of March following, he writes then to Lord Castlereagh a note, of which we saw the minute prefixed to the falsification in the Abbé's hand-writing, saying, "*Besides the papers I have already shewn you,* "I have also since found in another bundle three "minutes of letters written by Napoleon, one of "which has no date. I have the honour of "transmitting copies of them to you, and they "are not the least interesting of the pieces which "have been discovered in the immense quantity

" of papers, amongst which we have been oblig-
" ed to make our researches."

This passage occurs at the end of a letter written by Blacas, on another subject, to Lord Castlereagh, and is extracted in the Moniteur with the exception of the words at the beginning, which I have underlined. I remarked to the duke this omission, and asked "to what " papers Mr. de Blacas alluded;" he said, "he " did not know; perhaps they were the papers " seen by the Duke of Wellington; perhaps they " were other forgeries; but that one thing was " clear, that the three additional letters were " the falsified correspondence founded on the " real minutes we had before seen, for it is cer- " tain the Duke of Wellington could not allude " to the three minutes, such as were shown to " Lord Castlereagh, otherwise he would have " drawn the conclusion made by the noble se- " cretary." The Moniteur of the 14th says, that the authority of Lord Wellington attests the pieces adduced by it are true; meaning, I presume, that the duke must have seen the real minutes which Blacas afterwards falsified. But we stated to Mr. de Bassano the improbability of Count Blacas running such a risk, by showing the real letters to one English minister, and the forged ones to another, and that probably the papers seen by the

duke were those alluded to in the first sentence, "*besides the papers I have already shewn you.*" The Duke of Bassano agreed at once to this, and said, "We found yesterday in the same "box a bundle of papers, which, to all appear-"ance, are those on which Lord Wellington "formed his judgment." These he produced: they were in the same hand-writing as the three fabrications; the originals being, it is supposed, in the possession of Count Blacas. The envelope of the papers mentioned seven inclosures, but only six were remaining, the third being lost: two of them were letters from Fouché, dated Lucca, 1814; one a letter from the Princess Eliza Borghese to Napoleon; another a letter from the Duke of Feltre; and the last document a communication from the French consul, dated Lucca. All these papers we carefully read, and were answered most patiently such questions as we thought it necessary to put in the course of the perusal. It was the mention of General Clarke's letter by the Duke of Wellington in his note to Count Blacas, which gave Mr. de Bassano a hope that he might find the letters on which his grace's opinion was founded. It is hardly possible to doubt that these are those papers; that is to say, the copies of them. Indeed, I see by Lord Castlereagh's notice of the reply in the Moni-

teur, that he virtually allows them to be so, and you recollect that he quoted the Princess Borghese's letter in his first speech on the 2d of May. Their identity is moreover deducible from the conclusion drawn by the Duke of Wellington, which is just such as any honourable man of sense forming a fair judgment, without any political bias, would have found it necessary to infer. The papers are exceedingly curious; the princess' letter is written in a style worthy of her determined character, and indicative of the entire devotion and resolution with which she would hazard her welfare and her life to prop the falling fortunes of her imperial brother. She mentions, that the principal reason which determined Murat to side with the allies was a letter written to him by the Emperor of Austria, in which was a postscript of Metternich's, to this effect: "Austria "is the only one of the allied powers, *qui lutte* "*pour la dynastie Napoleonne;* by continuing "your alliance with France, you will do her no "service, and will lose your crown; whereas, "by joining Austria, you will preserve yourself, "and will, in conjunction with her, be able, "when peace is to be agreed upon, to throw "your weight into the scale with her to make "terms for the imperial family of France." We remarked upon this singularity of expres-

sion, and were answered with a smile, hinting that M. de Metternich ought to be too well known by this time to make any thing extraordinary which came from that quarter. The inclinations of Austria, supposing them to be sincere, need not surprise those who are aware that the Emperor Francis, as far as he himself was concerned, was only seduced into the war with his son-in-law in 1813, by a contrivance of M. de..... That minister said, that he knew the Emperor well; that no soothing from the allied sovereigns would be of any avail; that there was but one feasible method, viz. *to frighten* him. For this purpose, Russia declared, that if Austria did not immediately accede to the alliance, she would make peace with France, and leave the Emperor Francis to the vengeance of Napoleon, who, it was shown by the artful disclosure of certain real or pretended documents, would be eager to make the sacrifice of his presumptuous father-in-law the first bond of reconciliation with Alexander. The Austrian Emperor thought the alternative of direct warfare preferable to protracted neutrality; and as for joining Napoleon, his ministers had then fallen into other politics, from those mixed motives and trifling turns which decide the conduct of statesmen as well as the less important portion of mankind. One of the most

determined opponents of the French system in the *interior* council of Francis at that time was ————, the favourite, who is to be added to

"All the mighty nanes by love undone."

And any one who has lived in the Vienna circles cannot be ignorant that the implacability of female revenge is to be reckoned amongst the causes operating towards the decline of French influence in the Austrian cabinet. The great schism which divided the western world for forty years is traced to three hasty words—a box on the ear may be a source no less respectable nor improbable of the quarrels and fall of empires.

The Duke of Bassano was sufficiently polite to acquit our secretary of state of partaking in the fraud of M. de Blacas, but could not help hinting, that he wondered his lordship should have allowed himself to be the dupe of so apparent and gross an imposture. And well may he wonder: for it must be past all comprehension, even of those who know our cabinet, to account for the blindness and facility with which they fell into the snare of a government who they knew were interested to deceive them, and whose efforts to produce a decision against Murat they had before so repeatedly witnessed both at the congress and at Paris. The minutes

of the three letters, as presented by M. de Blacas to Lord Castlereagh, were all of them supposed to be written in 1814, after Napoleon had quitted Paris for the last time; but M. de Blacas told Lord C. he had found these minutes at Paris. Now how came his lordship not to ask by what means these minutes came to Paris, to which the Emperor never returned after the alleged writing of them, instead of being carried with the other state papers intermediately composed, or received, to Elba? Was it likely that they should be sent to the archives, and that they should be the only documents of that date transferred thither? The fact is, that no private cabinet papers, especially such compositions as private letters from the Emperor to his brother-in-law, were, or were likely to be sent to Paris, after Napoleon had quitted it for the campaign of 1814—and it was unpardonable in Lord Castlereagh not to suggest to himself the extreme improbability of such a supposition, and the consequent chance of forgery in the case of the alleged correspondence. Lord Castlereagh may have had other grounds for going to war with Murat; but this minister in his speech certainly lays the greatest stress on this correspondence, and has the extreme assurance to open his account of the notable discovery by stating, that the

Prince Talleyrand had told him, &c. &c. that long time after the negotiation between Murat and the allies, the former had entered into negotiations with Napoleon to occupy Italy up to the Po, and of this he had the *most certain proofs*. What these certain proofs were Lord C. does not say; but proceeds to read and comment upon the letter of the Princess Borghese, which the Duke of Wellington pronounced, amongst others, to be inconsequential; and upon the three letters which we now see, and which he ought at once to have guessed, to have been fabrications.

Did ever minister before quote the assertion of the agent of one government as conclusive against another rival power, and of such an agent as M. de Talleyrand, whose perfidy, want of faith, cunning, and political immorality, have furnished so many a cumbrous, long-spun period, to the very bench whence his authority is now cited as little less than scriptural?

Much more extraordinary, however, even than this credulity and courage is the *victorious answer* —so I see it termed in the Courier—afforded by Lord Castlereagh, to the proofs given in the Moniteur of the 14th of the Blacas forgeries. His lordship says, that five of the eight letters are not denied by the Moniteur. True; but these five, of which the copies were found in

the Abbé Fleuriel's hand-writing, are those seen by the Duke of W., and which he pronounced insignificant, as any one would; and whether *forged or not* prove nothing, as he said, against Murat. His grace, however, wrote to Lord Castlereagh a letter from Vienna, in which he says that he is now satisfied of the treachery of Murat. Well, and likely enough, if he was shown the three forged letters, which convinced Lord Castlereagh, and which were written between the 4th of January, 1815, and the 4th of March following. However, the duke's letter has not been produced by Lord Castlereagh. Lastly, the secretary says, he has examined the originals of the three letters in question, which were sent by Count Blaeas to the Sicilian ambassador, and has not the least doubt of their authenticity. This is really too bad. The *originals;* what originals? The original minutes are at Paris—the original letters are at Naples, or with the King of Naples. What does Lord Castlereagh mean by saying he saw them in London? It is inconceivable that some one should not have told his lordship, that it was next to an impossibility that Count Blacas should be in possession of original minutes of Napoleon's writing after he had quitted Paris for the last time; and that this, together with the fact of the very expressions of the fabrications being found in

real letters of a different date, was an indubitable proof of the imposture. If his lordship will not own himself to have been deceived, he must then be gored with the other horn of the dilemma; and, in my opinion, it is somewhat less disgraceful to be the dupe than the coadjutor of knavery.

There is, I own, nothing contrary to form and usage in the triumphant air and infinite satisfaction with which the secretary concluded the first production of these wretched fabrications, by kindly offering a *salutary lesson* to the members of opposition, not to trust to their own weak illuminations, nor be over-hasty in giving credence to documents which proceed from any other than the true official fountains of Downing-street. Whether deceived or deceiving, it is not unbecoming, in such a predicament, to deprecate and condemn all wilful knowledge, all irregular information, all enquiry and illustration dispersive of ministerial ignorance and obscurity. It may be presumed that the next step to the declaration of the treasonable qualities of truth and intelligence will be an edict against preaching politics in the vulgar tongue of sense and patriotism, in manifest detriment and overthrow of the learned mysterious involutions of the treasury pulpits. To forbid conclusions is but a little more hardy

than to proscribe facts. The ostrich is nothing to such a minister; the one thinks that because he cannot see, his enemies are blind; but the other would make them so.

But his lordship probably thinks of his narrow politics and his old social system,

"Ainsi qu'en ont usé sagement nos aieux;"

as Sganarelle did of his thin legs and antiquated hose; for he offers the expedient invented by that precious pantaloon, against the aversion and reproof of such as found him ridiculous and intolerable,

"Et qui me trouve mal n'a qu'à fermer les yeux."

NOTE.—Whilst this is preparing for the press arrives the news that Murat, in attempting to recover his crown, has lost his life—the victim of the falsehood of one cabinet, and the folly of another, and of his own temerity, in hazarding the imitation of a great and successful enterprise, where all the circumstances of the supposed parallel did not coincide. There is, perhaps, no throne, the struggle for which has occasioned such a repetition of bloody wars and domestic tragedies as that of Naples, from the earliest periods of modern history to the present day; but, excepting Conradin, who also died by the order of a relation of a king of France, I know of no other of its kings than Joachim Napoleon who has fallen by the executioner. I trust, I feel assured, that Lord Castlereagh, instead of exulting, must shudder at the catastrophe, which, so far from justifying or excusing, must cast a deadly stain upon that policy (the offspring of credulity and deceit), to which must be traced the original cause

of the fall and the death of this unfortunate—this injured man.

It is hardly worth while to argue whether Ferdinand had the right to kill his prisoner—unfortunately he had the power. A Bourbon has executed a brother of Napoleon, who spared the life of the Duke of Angoulême, after his own head had been set up to sale by the uncle of that prince. We shall be reminded of the Duke of Enghien:—but let no one ever presume again to taunt the imperial cabinet with an action that has found such a confirmation. It is to be hoped, that when a soldier, brave as chivalry, generous, hospitable, known to many an Englishman by the unprecedented partial exercise in his favour of every amiable and kingly quality, and whose political crime was a treachery not to the allied cause, but to that of his brother, fell under the musquets of a cruel cowardly court, no participation or approval of such a vengeance was extorted from any British minister. The manes of Caraccioli want no companion. Perhaps a hand might have been stretched to save him, without any loss to the British reputation for honour and moderation. There is one point of view under which this dreadful deed must affect every honest man with peculiar regret, independent of all consideration either for the person himself, or indignation for the cause of his fall—namely, that the day of retribution will be more bloody, and the retaliation of the people, whether of France, Italy, or any other part of Europe, more severe when they are triumphant, than a milder use of a momentary success, on the part of the conspired sovereigns, would have occasioned or justified. What revolutionary chieftain would dare to show mercy to a member of any of the ancient dynasties after such an example of the mercy to be expected at their hands? what popular government, after throwing off the chains of despotism, would think themselves doing their duty by their countrymen, by conniving at the escape of those whose pretensions

and pernicious power can be extinguished only by extirpation?

The base unmanly exultation of those amongst us who designate this execution by epithets properly bestowed only on acts of wise and vigorous policy, not such as bespeak conscious weakness and fear, deserves only to be noticed in order to show the taint which spreads through all the partisans of this accursed legitimacy, so as to corrupt every principle of candour, clemency, confidence, and true courage, even in the breasts of those who breathe the happy air of freedom, and feed on the generous fruits of her salubrious soil. No sooner has a general benevolence in favour of the rights of nations been worked into a disposition inclined towards families or individuals in their royal capacities, than a proportionate contraction displays itself in every sentiment, and gives even to actions in themselves praiseworthy a character of selfishness inconsistent with true dignity. "The "man who fights for an individual is a slave—the hero "is he that combats for his country"—the personal exposure of each is the same—the difference is made by the comparative insignificance of the cause, and the inferiority of the object of the pensioner to that of the patriot.

There is no appendage of a king entirely, or, perhaps, in some cases, at all contemptible, except his courtiers, in whom "the divinity that doth hedge him" does by no means consist; for these are, by common consent, and long usage, delivered over to the hatred and raillery of all mankind, in every country where human reason has made the slightest progress. How then is it that so many men, even in our land of freedom and common sense, seduce themselves into as slavish an admiration and respect for certain crowned heads, as could be commanded from the most abject and insignificant followers of these royal despised retinues? This is being pandars to our own abasement, without the honour, the reward, or the expediency, which give a countenance,

or, at least, an excuse, to the servility of those who are born the property of others, and can diminish their own disgrace only by magnifying the power and importance of him to whom they belong. Besides, it is observable, that being ourselves supposed to enjoy the privileges of the purest independence, this base part taken by our writers and politicians gives to the national character an air of cruelty and selfishness, as if we exulted in, and would willingly contemplate, the protraction of evils from which we ourselves are free.

LETTER XVIII.

Paris, May 31.

THE Champ de Mai is fixed for to-morrow. The Square Vendôme is full of the deputations from the different corps of the army, who are to assist at this ceremony, and the General Caffarelli told a friend of mine yesterday that there were not less than fifty thousand regular troops in and about the vicinity of the capital, to secure the public tranquillity, and to prevent a catastrophe, as well as to form part of the army of reserve. The imperial guards are still in Paris, and are generally reviewed on Sundays, together with such regiments as happen to be passing through the capital. On Sunday (yesterday) I was in the Tuileries, where five regiments of the line and four of the young guard, together with a body of recruits, were paraded before the Emperor. Napoleon stood for some time immediately under the window of the council of state, in which I was placed, and gave me the opportunity of observing one or two circumstances which I hope you will not think too trifling to deserve

mention. It was a very hot day, and he was standing in the shade of the building as the regiments passed, but, looking up, he advanced a pace or two, and placed himself in the sun, as it appeared to me and those who were with me, evidently because he observed that he alone was protected from the heat. A battalion of the guard coming up, Napoleon stepped forwards to them, and, whilst they were filing, marched with his hands behind, absolutely confounded with and amongst the soldiers. Some regiments of the line were then drawn up in front; and presented arms: he walked along close to them, and seeing a grenadier with a petition in his hand, stopped before him, took the paper, talked for two minutes to him, and ended by pulling the man's nose. A little afterwards a colonel running up to him with some news, which he communicated with a laugh, the Emperor raised himself on tiptoe, and interrupted him by giving him a sound box on the ear, with which the officer went away smiling and shewing his cheek, which was red with the blow. I started at the sight, of which I knew neither the cause nor consequence, but was satisfied by a general officer, who informed me that such friendly flaps were not unusual with the Emperor, and that he himself had seen other instances of this singular fami-

liarity. On one occasion, a soldier, at a review, shouted *vive l'Empereur*, the whole line being silent, when Napoleon went up to him, and asking him how many campaigns he had served, added, "how happens it you have not been "promoted?" The soldier answered—"*on m'a* "*fait la queue trois fois pour la croix.*" "*Eh* "*bien,*" replied the Emperor, "*je te donne la* "*queue,*" and, giving him a slap in the face, conferred upon him the cross of the legion of honour. At his first interview with General Rapp since his return, he gave him that sort of blow, vulgarly called a punch in the stomach, crying—"*quoi, coquin, tu voudras me tuer?*" alluding to this general's being named by the king to a military division when the Emperor came from Elba.

These manners may appear gross and vulgar, but certainly they have succeeded completely with the French soldiery; for both on the present occasion and at other reviews, I have remarked an enthusiasm, an affection, a delight apparent in the countenances of the troops at the sight of their general, which no parent can command in the midst of his family. The Emperor continued his inspection until six o'clock, having reviewed about fifteen thousand men, and, lastly, the cavalry of the guard, amongst which were distinguished the Polish lancers

who attended him at Elba. The colonel of these troops seemed intoxicated with pride and satisfaction, whilst he rode by the side of Napoleon down the line of his small squadron, and took care, when the Emperor passed in the rear, to face round and salute him again, contrary, I believe, to all discipline. The mamelukes of the guard are now reduced to about forty, and have deviated considerably from the true costume of that body. Nearly all of them are French. Rustan wisely deserted his master at his abdication*.

Of the French troops I shall only say that their appearance, to my eyes, is more military than that of any soldiers in the world, and that the old guard might pass for the representatives of the gentry of France. It is impossible to view them without admiration and regret. The guard will not leave the capital until immediately previous to the departure of the Emperor: the royalists assert that he dares not trust to his capital without them. The proceedings of these persons are such as would justify more violent measures than have hitherto been pursued. They have lately dispersed a paper

* Napoleon's valet was a still honester epitome of worldly attachment: he wrote to his former master when at Elba, and told him, "If he should ever be fortunate *(heureux)*, he, the valet, would be happy to serve him again."

called Address to the National Guards, dated from Ghent, in which those troops are advised to deliver Napoleon to the allies; also a similar paper called the Cry of Alarm, copies of which have been struck off in Paris, at the house of a lady, who has been arrested. Messrs. Gautier, father and son, a celebrated physician and advocate, have likewise been imprisoned, together with others, whose friends therefore exclaim that the proscriptions are renewed. The disturbances in the departments continue, particularly in Poitou. Fifty of the 26th regiment have been killed near Bessieres, and the insurrection in La Vendée has assumed so serious an appearance that General Lamarque and five-and-twenty thousand picked troops have been sent to that quarter. Some battalions of the young guard were dispatched in post carriages to the general's army a few days ago. I mention these facts because the public papers have not been very explicit on this head. The superintendents of the journals could not be expected to admit intelligence which would so much disquiet the public mind. With respect to La Vendée, however, it should be considered as as enemy's country, nor will it be thought very formidable when it is recollected how long two millions of these royalists in arms were ineffectual against the rising republic.

The most decisive national spirit is on the other hand shown in other quarters, and especially in the protestant departments. Some alarms in Gard, of an insurrection of the Bourbonists, immediately assembled 10,000 of the national guards, and General Gilly easily collected 25,000 peasants from the mountains for the immediate suppression of another royalist movement. But I cannot flatter you with hopes that any real uneasiness is felt on account of these distant dissensions: and although the *frondeurs*, an abundant party at present at Paris, do not fail to lament the want of unanimity, every one is aware that there will be no want of that virtue amongst the troops who will decide the great cause in the plains of Belgium. Strange as it may appear, there are yet some few individuals who entertain hopes of peace, notwithstanding the finishing stroke seems to be preparing for the general confederacy against France, by the efforts made to add Switzerland to the grand alliance. It was hoped for a moment in Paris, that the Swiss might be induced to assist in the defence of the French frontier by way of protecting their own neutrality. But the utmost now hoped for is, that she will add none of her forces to the combined armies. However, no blood has it appears yet been spilt, except by the Prus-

sians at Liege, who seem to have opened the campaign against the Saxon revolters. Swords have been drawn also in Paris, in a literary quarrel, between Mr. Montlosier, author of the treatise on "the French monarchy," and Mr. de Constant; when the former being run through the pen-hand, no further mischief ensued. With this exception, no commotion or contest of any kind has disturbed the peace, although such are the blind rumours and whispered apprehensions of the saloons of this capital, that I was in an apartment the other evening, where the explosion of some fireworks at the gardens of Tivoli was at first taken for the fusillade of an insurrection.

LETTER XIX.

June 2.

Mr. B— and myself were present yesterday at the assembly of the *Champ de Mai*, of which though a detailed account will soon be seen in your English papers, I cannot help telling you what we ourselves witnessed.

On the 31st, the discharge of a hundred cannons from the bridge of Jena had announced the eve of the ceremony, and a similar salute was fired at daylight the next morning. A programma of the fête, together with the order from the minister of police, was fixed to the walls, and cried, to prevent the occurrence of accidents, which are very rare on these occasions, "*for they do these things*," it must be confessed, "*better in France.*" We had previously visited the building prepared for the assemblage, which was a vast pentagonal semicircular amphitheatre of painted wood and canvas work, at the upper end of the *Champ de Mars*, and immediately in front of the military school. The amphitheatre was

open on all sides, and separated in the middle by a space, in which was a structure covered with a canopy, containing an altar, and seats for priests, musicians, and other performers of the mass. There were nominal divisions made by the wooden pillars of the building, surmounted by large wooden eagles, under which were written the names of the departments, the enumeration of which associated itself, in my mind, in a very lively manner, with the extent and power of the empire.

A structure of the same materials was raised against the face of the military school, covered with a square canopy in the middle, and jutting out into oblong wings on each side. Under the canopy, a flight of carpeted steps descended from the principal window in the first story of the building, and about half way between the window and the ground was a platform for the throne. This structure formed as it were the chord, of which the amphitheatre was the arc. Besides these preparations, there was a bare pyramidical platform, with an ascent on each side of a flight of steps, fifteen feet high, about a hundred yards in front of the amphitheatre; or, it ought to be called, at the back of it, on which was placed a plain arm-chair, open and uncovered: one of those pieces of wood, which, as Napoleon said, is not made a throne by the

carpenter, but by the man who sits in it. These temporary edifices were rather tawdry than otherwise, and it was ill-contrived that the assembly should sit with their backs to the multitude in the Champ de Mars, and even to the Emperor during the time that he sat upon the open throne. We set off at nine o'clock; and walking by the Tuileries, the Elysian Fields, the quay and bridge of Jena, crossed into the Champ de Mars, which we traversed through the masses of soldiery of the imperial and national guard, which were forming upon the plain. Arrived at the amphitheatre, and showing our admission tickets, we were conducted by a grenadier of the guard, after a mistake or two, into the inner structure, which we found nearly full, and took our places in the seats allotted, according to the lettering under the eagles, to the department of the Sarthe. However, the electors had observed no order in placing themselves, except that the deputations from the army, chiefly common soldiers, occupied the two wings of the amphitheatre. Of the 15,000 said to be assembled, I must suppose that there were very many who were equally electors with ourselves; for a profusion of tickets were distributed by the court, and my companion had five or six sent to himself. Nor was there much choice in the selection;

for the audience drank brandy, and gave into other plebeian amusements, which by no means recommended their neighbourhood. The multitude of heads, however, made the spectacle imposing, even as far as the electors contributed to the sight, and every other part of the scene was indescribably magnificent. The windows and the roof of the military school were filled with ladies; the area of the theatre with electors, and with innumerable standard-bearers, whose glittering eagles and tricoloured banners made a dazzling show. The eagles were in a cluster at each wing at first; but before the ceremony commenced, they were ranged in a row round the area in face of the pavilion of the throne. The throne was a gilt purple-coloured arm-chair, with a purple cushion on the ground before it: on the right of it were two common chairs, on the left a single chair; beyond, on each side, under the canopy, were square boxes, or tribunes, under which was a range of other tribunes. The children of the Queen of Holland soon appeared, and took their seats in the tribune to the left of the throne: and shortly afterwards arrived the court of cassation, the court of accounts, the council of the university, the imperial court, and the magistracy of Paris in robes, some of which I thought fantastic. These took their places in

the tribunes under the sides of the throne. Every now and then appeared officers of the court on the flight of steps above the throne, in singular fancy dresses like the Spanish costume. The interval was very tedious; there were continual shouts at every arrangement of the eagles, especially those of the national guards, and also cries of hats off! sit down! but no tumult. The first sign of the approaching ceremony was the lighting of the candles at the altar; and, at a quarter after twelve, we heard the cannon announce the departure of the Emperor from the Tuileries. My friend and myself were about six benches from the highest range of seats; so that by pressing backwards and turning round, we looked over the Champ de Mars, and beheld a sight superb indeed: the troops were drawn up on each side down the whole length of the plain—the whole of the national guard, and the imperial guard, and the troops of the line, as well as the *gendarmery*, were under arms, either in the field or in the city. In half an hour the cannon of the bridge of Jena told us, that the imperial procession had set foot on the plain; we had before seen the red lancers filing over the bridge, and the long train of the cavalry of the guard, with the suite of carriages, moving along like a vast piece of distant clock-work, along

the quay of the palace of the King of Rome, on the other side of the Seine. The cavalry of the guard, as they advanced towards the amphitheatre, formed on both sides, so as to make a lane in front of the infantry, the whole length of the plain, from the river to the throne. A line of imperial foot guards fenced off a passage round the left side of the amphitheatre, to form an entry for the imperial carriages into the interior of the structure. Shortly, the commandant of Paris, Count Hulin, and his staff, with the heralds at arms, approached us, and wheeled through this lane to the left: he was followed by fourteen state carriages, each drawn by six bay horses. The last but one of these showed us Cambaceres, the arch-chancellor of the empire; and the last the three imperial princes. They advanced at a slow trot, and wound round into the amphitheatre. After a short interval, we saw a squadron of red lancers, followed by a mass of officers on service, aide-de-camps, and state grooms. These immediately preceded the imperial carriage, which was a large gilt coach, with glass pannels, surmounted by an immense gilt crown, nearly covering the whole top of the body. Four footmen or pages were crowded before, and six behind; and two marshals of the empire rode on each side of the carriage, which

was drawn by eight milk white horses, dressed in lofty plumes of white, each led by a groom, who scarcely could hold him down. Napoleon was distinctly seen through the glass pannels, in his plumage-covered bonnet and imperial mantle: he bowed, as he passed round the amphitheatre, to the shouts of the soldiers and the people, which were mingled with the repeated discharges of artillery from the batteries of the military school. A squadron of the chasseurs of the guard closed the procession. We returned to our seats; and presently, a body of pages, in green and gold uniforms, ran down the stairs from the window, and ranged themselves on each side the steps from the platform of the throne to the ground. A grenadier of the guard was posted at the foot of the steps to the left and to the right. The tribunes under the canopy then began to be filled. The grand cordons of the legion of honour, and the marshals of the empire, occupied that on the left, and the counsellors of state placed themselves in that to the right. Several great officers of state, in fancy dresses, Spanish mantles, and feathered bonnets, took their station chiefly on the steps to the right of the throne. The Duke of Vicenza and Count Segur, grand master of the ceremonies, stood at the top of the highest step. The arch-

chancellor Cambaceres then tottered down to the platform, in a blue mantle spotted with gold bees, to a chair placed for him a little below the chairs to the right of the throne. There was much laughing in our vicinity when this personage appeared, whose talents and whose taste are alike notorious throughout the empire. The Archbishop of Tours and the Cardinal Cambaceres, with four bishops and assistants, ascended into the tribune of the altar. It was one o'clock. The artillery still thundered from the battery, when Napoleon, amidst a mass of his nobles and princes, marched from the window down the steps to the platform, and the assembly arose with a shout. All were uncovered except the Emperor, who wore his Spanish black bonnet, shaded with plumes, and looped with a large diamond in front. His mantle was of purple velvet, edged with broad embroidery of gold on the outside, and lined with white ermine, scarce descending to his ancles, and tied round his throat without any arm-holes. He advanced hastily in front, bowed, or rather nodded, two or three times, and flung himself, or to use the right word, plumped himself down into his throne, and rolled his mantle round him. He looked very ungainly and squat. His brothers took their seats at his side; Lucien to the left, Joseph and Jerome to the

right: they were caparisoned in fancy dresses of white taffety from head to foot; and, excepting the house of Austria, looked as ill as the princes of any legitimate house in Christendom. No sooner was the Emperor seated than the artillery was silenced, by a signal from an officer who flourished a sword from the left of the steps of the throne, and was answered by the drums in the area of the theatre. A small velvet-covered altar, or *prie Dieu*, was moved before the Emperor, and now mass was performed by the priests and the musicians of the opera-house, in the tribune opposite to the pavilion. During this interval Napoleon was less occupied with his prayers than with an opera-glass, with which he was contemplating the assembly. The music ceased, the velvet altar was removed, and immediately a large body of men crowded from the area, and ascended the steps of the throne. These were the central deputation from the electors of the empire, chosen a few days before by selection from all the colleges. They filled the whole flight of steps, and were introduced in a mass to the Emperor. One of them, the advocate *Duboys*, deputy from Angers, on the right of the throne, then read, from a paper in his hand, a speech, with much motion, and action more than oratorical: though he spoke very loud, not a word was to

be heard where we sat. The Emperor nodded assent to certain positions of his address, which, when you have read it, you will conceive very natural; for it abounded in panegyric; and, although it was prepared by a committee of the central deputation, has on that account been severely criticised. You will, nevertheless, recognize certain truths in the performance, and will applaud the indignation launched against the conspiracy of kings.

The expression, "that the nation would be ready to disengage the Emperor from the moderate conditions which he had proposed to the allied powers," must be attributed to their indignation; and the orator very well put the question of the personal rejection of Napoleon, when he hinted, that if the French preferred peace to war, they preferred war to shame. The speech was concluded amidst the shouts of the assembly. The arch-chancellor then rose from his seat, and, advancing to the Emperor with certain papers in his hands, communicated to him the acceptation of the constitution; and the master of the ceremonies received the orders of the Emperor to carry the result to the herald at arms. The sword was flourished, and the drums beat, when the herald, in a voice not audible to us, declared the acceptation of the constitution. At this moment the batteries

fired a general salute. The central deputation moved a little lower down; but still filled the principal part of the steps of the throne. The attendants of the great chamberlain then placed a small gilt table, containing a gold writing standish, before the Emperor. The arch-chancellor laid the constitution on the table, and handed the pen to Prince Joseph, who gave it to Napoleon. The Emperor quickly and carelessly put his name to this famous act at ten minutes before two o'clock. The table was moved away; and then, opening a roll of paper, he addressed the immense concourse in a loud shrill voice, which at times made him audible even to the benches where we were placed. His opening words—*Empereur, consul, soldat, je tiens tout du peuple**—reached us distinctly, as also the sentence—*j'ai convoqué le Champ de Mai.* He was applauded at the end with cries of *Vive l'Empereur! Vive Marie Louise!* but I heard no shouts of *Vive la nation!* which the Moniteur asserts to have been frequent. The second cry might have been spared by dextrous courtiers, as it must have served to remind Napoleon of the absence of her whom he had promised his people should be the queen of the fête. When the acclamations had subsided, the Archbi-

* See Appendix—No. 15.

shop of Bourges, first almoner of the empire, presented the Testament, upon his knees, to Napoleon, who took the oath "to observe, and to cause the observance of the constitution;" and the *Te Deum* was chaunted from the tribune of the altar. There was, at this time, no little crowding and confusion near the throne, and I see by the papers that the oath was now administered to Cambaceres, who swore "obedience to the constitutions and to the Emperor." There was no cry, as the Moniteur says, from the assembly of *Nous le jurons.* The sword was again waved and the drums beat. The steps were cleared, and the eagles from the wings pressed forward into the centre of the area, forming one long dazzling mass of gold, from the tribune of the altar to the front of the throne. The ministers of the interior, of war, and of the marine, descended from their places, and shortly returned, followed by many standard-bearers and a body of officers, who pressed upwards, near the throne. The republican Carnot, in his white Spanish dress, carried the eagle of the national guard of the department of the Seine; the bald-headed Davoust that of the first regiment of the line, and Decrès of the first marine corps. Then it was that Napoleon, with an animation in his manner and countenance which gave to that ceremony a

superior interest to any other event of this national assembly, threw off his imperial mantle, hastily leaped from his throne, and advanced to meet his eagles. The waving sword and beating drums commanded silence, and taking the standards in his hands he returned them to the three ministers, with a short speech, which he delivered in a loud and lively tone. The concluding sentence, "*Vous le jurez,*" pierced the whole assembly, and was answered by the exclamation of those around the throne—"We swear."

The speech was as follows: "*Soldats de la garde nationale de l'empire—Soldats des troupes de terre et de mer, je vous confie l'aigle impériale aux couleurs nationales, vous jurez de la défendre au prix de votre sang contre les ennemis de la patrie et de ce trône. Vous jurez qu'elle sera toujours votre signe de ralliement—vous le jurez.*" The drums beat, and shortly afterwards the Emperor, still in his short crimson tunic, accompanied by all his marshals and dignitaries, and lost to our sight in the blaze of uniforms, and eagles, and banners, descended the steps, traversed the area, passed through the opening of the theatre by the altar, and crossing between files of soldiers mounted the platform in the open plain. He seated himself on his throne, surrounded by his marshals and

court, who occupied the steps on each of the four sides of the structure. My friend and myself pressed backwards to the outward circle of the amphitheatre, and surveyed a scene more magnificent than any pen can describe. The monarch on his open throne, which seemed a glittering pyramid of eagles, and arms, and military habits, crowned by his own white plumes —an immense plain, as it were, of soldiers, flanked with multitudes so innumerable that the sloping banks on each side presented but one mass of heads—the man—the occasion—all conspired to surprise us into a most unqualified, unphilosophical admiration of the whole spectacle before us; which was not diminished when the bayonets, and cuirasses, and helmets, flashing as far as we could see, and the flags of the lancers fluttering, and the music bursting from the plain, announced that the whole scene, far and near, began to move.

What passed previously on the platform we could not distinguish, but we saw the eagles paraded to the left before the throne, and then moved lower down into the plain, where such of them as belonged to the troops on duty were delivered to their respective regiments; the remainder being carried back to the military school. It seems that the Emperor, in his character of colonel of the national guard of

Paris and of the imperial guard, presented the eagles to the president of the department and six arrondissements and to the chiefs of his guard, after which, a body of the soldiery of both corps forming, with a crowd of officers, in front of the throne, he addressed the national guard and imperial guard in a second speech*, interrupted by drums, and by frequent acclamations of "We swear." The national guard swore never to suffer the capital to be again polluted by the presence of foreigners; the imperial guard to exceed their former prowess. The whole army, amounting, it is said, to fifty thousand, of which twenty-seven thousand were national guards, now filed before the throne, with their eagles, in admirable order; the imperial guard marching from right to left, and the others from left to right. Towards the end of the review the crowd rushed from the banks towards the throne, but no accident happened; a slight rope and a single line of soldiers, placed at considerable intervals, were sufficient to protect the amphitheatre and the throne.

It was half after three before the last battalion passed before the Emperor, who then rose from the throne, descended the platform, and,

* See Appendix—No. 15.

in the midst of his suite, returned to the interior of the assembly, and mounted to his former position. He turned round, and bowing several times very graciously, and apparently much pleased, quickly ascended the stairs with his court, and disappeared at the window of the palace. The procession soon left the amphitheatre in the same order in which it had arrived, except that the dragoons and lancers of the guard did not accompany the state carriage, as before, and that it consequently passed between a line of spectators the whole length of the Champ de Mars; the troops having by this time nearly left the plain. The departure was announced by the batteries of the military school and the bridge of Jena, as at the entry of the Emperor.

Such was the long expected *Champ de Mai*, which is now known by its right name, and is called "the distribution of the eagles:" in fact it was nothing more, and is misnomered when described as a national fête. Whether it bore any resemblance to the fields of March and of May, at which were assembled the warlike estates of Charlemagne and his successors, no one has thought it worth while to discuss, any more than its similarity to the Tartar Cour-Ilté, the model of the Franc parliaments; but the Censor draws an invidious comparison between

it and the memorable federation of 90, when the same plain was thronged by deputations from all the national guards of the kingdom, collected together to celebrate and seal the triumph of the people, and the subjection of the throne. The same publication objects to the Emperor having remained constantly covered in the presence of the uncovered representatives of France, and to the fantastical costumes of the court. Certainly, Mr. Carnot did not become his taffety tunic and feathered bonnet, or the tunic did not become Mr. Carnot; who, when he objects pertinaciously to sign himself Count Carnot, after having accepted the title, might perhaps decline tricking himself out in a fancy dress. The Censor says, that the acclamations were very sparing and partial, and that not 2000 people ever shouted at once during the whole ceremony. Yesterday evening, after the *Champ de Mai*, I happened to visit the Princess ———: a gentleman came into the room, and began laughing at the whole transaction—" never was there such a paltry, " gaudy, melancholy exhibition—not a soul ap- " plauded except the military, and they but sel- " dom and faintly." He had scarcely finished when another gentleman entered, and at once launched forth into raptures at the success with which the scene of the day had been crowned

—what struck him particularly was that the military had not been very loud in their shouts —but the electors and the spectators had never ceased their acclamations. Every body smiled; —which was to be believed? both had been present—neither were Frenchmen, nor interested to deceive; and the event recorded had taken place but four hours before, in presence of two hundred thousand people, who could give the lie to any misrepresentation. *How is history written? or how believed?* This is not meant for a *memoire pour servir:* but I will tell you my own impression. The loudest and longest acclamations were when the Emperor first appeared, and when he delivered the eagles; but neither then, nor at any other period, were the cries very animated. They generally began and ended with the military deputations in the wings of the amphitheatre, and particularly with one individual soldier, who was so pertinacious as to raise a laugh more than once in the whole assembly. The usual cries were, *Vive l'Empereur!* and now and then, *Vive Marie Louise!*—I did not hear *Vive la nation!*

If there were no frequent and loud acclamations, there were no hired applauders, a class attached to the police department during the former reign of Napoleon, and employed occa-

sionally, at present at least, if the malcontents say true*.

The number of votes in favour of the constitution were, 1,288,357: the negative votes amounted to 4207. The army gave in 222,000 names for, and 320 against, the act: the navy about 22,000 affirmatives, and 275 negatives. Eleven departments, and some of the regiments, had not sent in their registers. The departments in which the votes were the most numerous were the Côte d'Or, the Jura, the Moselle, La Meurthe, Saone et Loire, the Vosges, and the Yonne. The department of the Côtes du Nord, out of 6000 names, gave in 1058 negatives—a sufficient proof that no compulsion was resorted to in that quarter, although a contrary conclusion may be drawn from the registers of Paris, which show 20,082 affirmative, and only 570 negative votes, in a place where opinion is so much divided. In fact, the Anti-Napoleonists did not like to commit themselves in the face of the police; and it is certain, that the workmen of the suburbs furnished the greater number of the approving suf-

* In the garden of the Tuileries, the night of the king's return, July, 1815, I heard many of those who were shouting *vive le roi!* cry out, "*nous ne sommes pas payés à quarante sous.*"

frages of the capital; but the reason of this is to be found, not so much in any dislike to Napoleon, as to the discredit into which this method of *consulting the people has fallen.* The people accepted the constitution of the year 8: two years afterwards the people accepted the nomination of Bonaparte to the consulship for life: and again, in two years, the same people declared its wish, that the imperial dignity should be settled in the family of Napoleon Bonaparte: but all the signatures attached to each of these acts of the nation put together would not amount to a quarter of the population of France. As therefore there has been no stipulated proportion requisite to give authority to this declaration of the will of the people, and as it is evident that the mere opening of registers will be always sufficient to secure, from the public functionaries and dependents on the government, a certain majority over any number of negative votes that can, without a rebellious combination, be possibly procured, it seems a consequence, that no constitution can be considered fundamental, which, by recurring to the same means by which it was created, can with such facility be overthrown.

Nothing can be conceived more vicious than this method of collecting the wishes of the people, who can no more be said to be represented by the

signatures of such acts than the English nation was by the mayor, and aldermen, and ragamuffins of the Tower hamlets, who chose Gloster to be king; and I am persuaded, that the manifest and acknowledged absurdity of the appeal has been the chief cause why the additional act to the constitutions of the empire has been only thus partially accepted. Add to this, that as the new parliament is to remodel the constitution, it matters but little either to approve or object to the original draught of the Tuileries. For my own part, I conceive the provisions of the constitution to be such as a lover of his country may fairly approve. I should not object to its being granted, any more than to its being composed by an individual; and I should be inclined to inquire, whether the nation had the power rather of maintaining than of choosing the conditions of their liberty. Although there was no proposal in the act relative to the re-election of Napoleon, there is a general persuasion, that his dictatorship ceased at the moment that he signed the constitution, and that he is now rechosen Emperor of the French. The constitution is now, however, in vigour; and the decrees which are affixed to the walls give a singular and speaking proof of the change of governments which France has witnessed within the last fifteen years. The past constitutions being still in

force, the *senatus consultum*, signed Bonaparte, first consul, sometimes appears at the top of the paper: another, in the middle, with the authority of Napoleon, *Empereur et Roi*; and at the bottom, the last promulgation, with *Napoleon Empereur*. The will of the Emperor is no longer to be a law; but amongst the four volumes of the *senatus consulta*, it will not be difficult to find, for the present, an apology for any act of government. There will be some embarrassment, however, in getting rid of the forms of despotism. The Emperor, in his speech, defers to the peace the final reduction of this mass of laws to a simple fundamental code; but it remains to be seen whether the chamber of representatives will allow of such a delay. The meeting of the two chambers is fixed for Saturday the 3d, to-morrow. The peers were named to-day; and a list of them is handed about, amounting to 116, of whom fifty at least are general officers. Labédoyère, Drouot, Ney, and Lallemand, are at once devoted to a pleasantry as the *quatre (pairs fides)*; whilst Lefebvre Desnouettes, Vandamme, and others, are the *quatre pairs siflés*. On the whole, the list is received with shrugs and smiles; but, at the same time, it is allowed, on all hands, that the utmost embarrassment attended the selection—that the old nobles

neither could nor would have been chosen; and that the prevalence of military members was unavoidable, from the superior respectability of the class of general officers, which, in fact, may be said to compose the nobility, whether modern or ancient, of France. The gratitude of the Emperor obliged him to make a merit of the act, which has rendered the above-mentioned nobles obnoxious to a pun; but there is a chamberlain or two who seems to have been thrown in by accident, or out of laziness. Where was Napoleon to choose? The *frondeurs* answer this by saying, that he ought not to have chosen at all—at least, that the original selection should not have been his: and a plan has been mentioned, which, it is supposed, may be adopted in any future nomination. In each of the departments three or five of the principal proprietors are to be named by the electoral colleges, and presented to the Emperor, out of which he is to take one. A great part of the present house of peers may soon fall in the field, and a replenishment will be necessary.

Mr. Constant's pamphlet is published. It was necessary for this gentleman to say some little of himself, as his acceptance of office under Napoleon, on the 20th of April, immediately subsequent to a violent attack, honestly

ventured against him as he was advancing to Paris, to prop a mouldering fabric, has subjected him, unjustly, I think, to the suspicions of the pure constitutionalists. For twenty years he has demanded the liberty of the subject, the liberty of the press, the suppression of all arbitrary encroachment, and respect for the rights of all. "These objects," he continues, "have always been, and are still my end and aim; and I pursue them, at this moment, with equal zeal and with more hope." To excuse himself, he had only to justify Napoleon; and in his last chapter he relies for all apology for his Emperor upon an appeal to facts, the convocation of a representation of the people chosen freely, and without any interposition of government influence, the unlimited freedom of the press, and the restitution of the choice of their magistrature to a numerous portion of the citizens.

"All this he has done," continued M. Constant, "when in possession of the dictatorship; "and when had he wished for despotism, he "might have endeavoured to have retained it. "It may be said," he adds, "that his interest "opposed such an effort—doubtless, but is not "that as much as to say that his interest accords with the public liberty? and is not that "a reason for confidence?" I see no means of answering the question in a manner which can

discredit either Napoleon, or M. Constant. You will perceive the state of feeling in this country, from the tone and manner with which a person of the reputation of M. Constant thinks it necessary to reconcile his conduct in accepting a place under the imperial government to his former professions. It should seem that M. C. has made the painful discovery, "that certain men are but too happy to throw off the burthen of esteem, and recognize the failings of a person whose irreproachability weighed hitherto upon their hearts." Those whom his eloquent complaint is intended to reach are not the royalists, but, apparently, the constitutionalists, his former admirers, the distrust of whom in the character of Napoleon can be frequently collected from other portions of the work, and whom the author endeavours to persuade, that to obtain their patriotic objects, there is no course so pernicious as that which must encourage or assist the projects of invaders, the success of whom must terminate either in the division of France, or in an administration entirely dependent upon their will. M. Constant remarks, and justly, that the allies, just and moderate, if they are allowed to have been so, when they appeared last year in the character of the liberators of Europe, have now no other pretext than punishment—and a

punishment, which, beginning with Napoleon, is to involve the army and the nation itself. One cannot indeed but observe, that the hatred of the allied princes, like the overflowings of friendship stirred from a small centre, and originating only with an individual, has spread all around, and from embracing friends and adherents, has at last taken in a whole people as the accomplices of a single crime. With respect to the constitution, the author does not think it necessary to be less candid than the government itself, or to deny that it is capable of amelioration; but his work tends to the recommendation of the outline, and general principles which it contains. He concludes by confessing his willingness to leave the question of his own conduct, and (by implication) that of the new government, to be decided by the judge of all things—time.

"*L'avenir repondra; car la liberté sortira de* " *cet avenir, quelque orageux qu'il paraisse en-* " *core. Alors, après avoir, pendant vingt ans,* " *réclamé les droits de l'espece humaine, la sûreté* " *des individus, la liberté de la pensée, la garantie* " *des propriétés, l'abolition de tout arbitraire,* " *j'oserai me féliciter de m'être réuni, avant la* " *victoire, aux institutions qui consacrent tous ces* " *droits, j'aurais accompli l'ouvrage de ma vie.*"

The victory may not be as near as M. Constant conceives, but it is no less certain*.

Upon reflecting on the difficulties in which the Emperor is involved, with the boldest and most active part of France, I would ask you, whether his greatest enemy could contrive a plan more likely to deprive him of all chance of re-establishing himself in his ancient despotism, or even to endanger his throne, than by leaving the French at peace, and thus dissolving that union of effort to which the most distrustful and cautious are agreed in contributing, as the last resource for the salvation of their country; but which, after being employed as the protection, may encourage the ambition of the throne. Lest what I have just said should seem inconsistent with the apprehensions stated, as being entertained by M. Constant and others, relative to the constitutionalists, I shall add, that the hesitation of those who dread the propensities of the Emperor has no sort of connection with a

* Whilst this is preparing for the press, an account arrives of a revolt in Spain, and of a remonstrance of the Wirtemberg states against their king. Let us not despair; the victory will come—the rights of the human race must triumph over all the superannuated institutions of the ancient social system. Again—Porlier is no more; there are others.

preference of the Bourbons to the present government: every day makes it more apparent, that although there is a great diversity of opinion about men—the French are pretty much agreed about things. One of the most sensible men in Paris asserted much the same thing on this subject yesterday evening, when he said, "I do not talk of the *voltigeurs* of Louis XVIII., nor of the *voltigeurs* of Napoleon, (a number comparatively insignificant) but I say, that the nation is united on the great point, and that there is a determination on the part of the vast majority of us to procure for ourselves individual and national respectability and independence. We differ about the means, and that circumstance may give an appearance of inconsistency and disunion, for which, after all, the change and variation of our fortunes might sufficiently account; but our opinions of what we want may be said to be unanimous, and our endeavours to obtain the things needful will be as united as can be expected from a nation, which has done and suffered so much, and has still so much to suffer and do." Then turning towards myself, he added, "we are trying to do what you did a hundred years ago —unfortunately, we have many more obstacles in our way, and have not only to front our enemies, but to keep a look upon our friends. I

speak as a lover of my country, as one of the majority. A patriot should be a Janus, and have a pair of eyes for those who back his cause; however, no one who knows France or human nature can doubt of the termination of the struggle, let it be ever so long. I attach no great importance to Napoleon, except as an individual, who set in motion feelings too prevalent for any very protracted concealment. The first day he set foot at Cannes was, I know, the first day of a new revolution, which his defeat or success may retard or mature, but not finally terminate or entirely control."

The conversation ended by a general attack made on Mr. ———, a counsellor of state, who was present, for the new nomination of peers. An Englishman present asked him, "if he recollected whether there were 116 members in Cromwell's council of officers; and whether the people were great gainers by the Barebone's parliament?" To which the counsellor of state replied, "*Il n'-y-a pas question de Cromwell.*" You will forgive me for retailing this interlocutory discourse, which you may honour with the name of gossip; but which, when you consider its freedom, may make some impression upon you, if you are one of those who believe in the present subjection of opinion in France.

A pamphlet is just published with this title, *La Patrie avant tout, que m'importe Napoléon?* How would this sound in our vernacular, "Old England for ever! what care I for George Prince?" Such is the despotism of this cruel stratocracy, as that well-informed member Mr. Grattan calls it. I cannot help thinking what joy there must have been in the earthly heaven of Carlton-house, over the repentance of that sinner. The dialectics of Duigenan, and other just men, are nothing indeed to his inauguratory oration, which I read with increasing astonishment.

"What guarantee does Napoleon offer for the preservation of peace?" and what the allies? "600,000 men in arms to assure the tranquillity of the world—can the choice be doubtful?" This sentence must strike at Napoleon, or rather the French nation, who are here blamed for raising troops to resist 1,100,000 bayonets, with which they are threatened by their paternal king.

Who have raised these 600,000 men? who but the brother politicians of Mr. Grattan?

I am concerned to see, that Sir Francis Burdett, instead of confessing his inability to counteract the effect of such "an appeal to the passions," did not tell the house plainly, that the assertions of the right honourable gentleman were every one of them gratuitous. He might

have added, had he known as much as myself, that they were all founded on mistakes. How could he possibly know that the constitution proposed by Napoleon was only a lure, and that his sole intention was to establish a military power? Sir Francis might have told him, that ignorance itself was scarcely sufficient excuse for such a hardy surmise, which every present appearance in France tends flatly to contradict. But this is of a piece with the assertion of Lord Castlereagh, who, in his speech on the subsidy, counts amongst the allies the *very great party in France which will favour them.* Does Lord Castlereagh mean La Vendée? If so, Napoleon may quote Ireland as one of his auxiliaries. But he does not mean La Vendée. Never was the English nation so abused, as in the arguments offered to them for the renewal of hostilities—which are nearly all unfounded, and many of them contradictory. Some assert, that Napoleon is so weak, he may be immediately crushed; others, that he is so strong, that he is too formidable to be left at peace—these declare, that he has only the army for him, and that the nation pants for the Bourbons: those would reconcile France itself to the war by saying, that the restoration of the Bourbons is not the object of the war—Mr. C. would save France, who longs to escape from a tyrant—Lord F. would disarm

all France, who will be the willing accomplice of the ambition of this tyrant—Lord G. would fight, because the cause is just, though hopeless —Lord C. thinks success certain, and will afford the opportunity of substantiating various claims against France, which, at the former conquest, were unaccountably suffered to lie dormant; but *nullum tempus occurrit regi*, the Kings of Europe, like the King of England, cannot suffer by lapse; the demands may be made at any time. Mr. ——— thinks, that the only guarantee for the tranquillity of the world is the establishment of the Bourbon dynasty on the throne of France—therefore he votes for war. Mr. C.... G...., a lord of the treasury, wonders how the notion has got abroad, that the restoration of the Bourbons is the object of the war, when the allies expressly declare their aim to be so different. Your friend ——— says, we do not want any thing for ourselves, but must support the cause of the allies, whose honour and existence depend upon our aid; whereas, Mr. C.... G...., and many others, advise instant hostilities, for fear England should never have such a chance of catching the allies in the same humour of seconding her designs. Lord Castlereagh, lest any thing unreasonable and absurd should be wanting to *motive* the war, reads a forged

letter, and then says, that his residence in France during the last year has convinced him, that there is a principle of falsity at the heart of the French government, which, I presume, is to make it an object of hatred and attack, to all the moral courts of Europe. You will see that the Moniteur well enough remarks, that if he speaks of the government of the Count of Lille, his lordship has been most kindly helped to the confirmation of this opinion, by some late expositions of the imperial cabinet. As to the pretended letter of the 19th of March, 1814, from the Duke of Bassano to the Duke of Vicenza, it is quite sufficient to ask, whether it is probable that such a communication would be sent across the enemies' lines, when Austrian couriers were occasionally resorted to, not in cypher; and if it were in cypher, who could have decyphered it to Lord Castlereagh? In the papers of M. de Blacas left in the iron chest were discovered many letters prepared in a similar manner, it seems, for the inspection of the congress at Vienna; and if the documents relative to the congresses at Prague, at Chatillon, and at Vienna, now in possession of the imperial government, were published, as M. de Bassano told, in my hearing the other day, and has said in the Moniteur, might one day be done, the world would have some opportunity of judg-

ing if the French alone, of all Europe, are to be accused of want of faith, and justice, and moderation. Whatever may be the event of the war, it is evidently undertaken on the part of England without the foundation of adequate causes and motives, or the foresight of any of the probable consequences of victory or defeat; either of which will equally confound the calculations of our sagacious ministry.

LETTER XX.

Paris, June 7.

THE chambers met on Saturday last. The peers at the Luxembourgh, the commons at the palace of the legislative body. The former chose two secretaries, Mess. Thibeaudeau and Valence, who, together with the president Cambaceres, and the Counts Sieyes and Roederer, were named members of a commission for the internal regulation of the assembly. The representatives met at nine o'clock in the morning; the elder member took the chair, and two provisional secretaries were appointed, in order to proceed to the formation of the chamber by naming certain commissions, and choosing what they call the *bureau*, that is, the president and vice-presidents, and secretaries, by ballot. A member proposed, that this should be delayed beyond the next day, as the chamber, together with the electoral colleges, was invited by the Emperor to meet him at the Museum; but M. Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely made a motion, that the house should adjourn only until eight

o'clock the next morning; adding, with a tone rather factious in a minister, that, on all accounts, the house should rather occupy itself in the election of a president than in a ceremony, especially as they would have many opportunities of enjoying his Majesty's presence. The next day I was present at the discussion, being shown, without a ticket, into the galleries, in which I was surprised to find so few spectators at first, considering that this was the second day of meeting. I must say, that the appearance of the assembly, entirely popular as it is, was highly creditable, and such as would not disgrace the floor of St. Stephen's. Most of the members were in evening dresses, and three or four generals in uniform. The deputies in the king's time wore a livery of *fleurs de lys*, which proclaimed their dependence in too striking a manner to be imitated in this assembly. The company in the galleries was of a very inferior cast, in appearance, to that which frequents our house of commons, chiefly workmen (it seemed) between their hours of employ, a class of men which is not found in London; but which fills, at certain hours, half the coffee-houses and billiard-rooms at Paris. They did not, however, want either as good manners or as much sense as is to be found in any mixed audience of our capital. Two or three women

were present, and the reporters sat in a box by themselves. It was not difficult to see at once the cast of character which the new convention would assume; for, immediately after hearing the proceedings of the meeting of the day before, a Mr. Sibuet, deputy of the department of the Seine and Oise, rose in his place, and in a speech (which wanted none of the action of oratory) proposed that all titles should be dropped in that assembly, in which the most perfect equality ought to reign, and the president himself was to be only *primus inter pares*. He was declaiming, when a member interrupted him by saying, that he was speaking from a speech in his hat, which was contrary to that article of the constitution, forbidding expressly the reading of any written opinion in that assembly; on which Mr. Sibuet turned his vehemence from the nobility to this article of the constitution itself; but was silenced by being told, that these considerations should be deferred until the chamber was completely organised. Shortly afterward a message from the Emperor, sent by the minister of the interior, informed the house, in reply to its application to know the names of all the peers, before it proceeded to the choice of a president, in order to prevent their electing an individual designated for a member of the higher

house, "that the requisite list would be trans-
"mitted in due time, but not immediately." The message was received with murmurs of discontent. They proceeded to ballot for a president, which was done by each member putting his paper into an urn, with a minuteness that gave me an opportunity of seeing all the men of any note who have survived the revolution; for such it seems have been elected in this parliament, which is now confessed to be the most popularly chosen of any since the constituent assembly.

There was no little tumult in determining whether the votes given to Lafayette, without the designation of Lafayette the father, should be permitted to pass in favour of the elder or the younger, his son, of that name. There seemed considerable eagerness in some members that Lafayette should not be chosen; and, after the election, when a member of the chamber informed me on the steps of the palace that Lanjuinais had been elected, and not Lafayette, he took me by the hand, though I knew him not, saying, "Wish us joy, sir; we have not "got that man, but one of the right sort; a "bold decisive man, no trimmer." One of the door-keepers, who overheard him, rejoined, "Yes, Mr. Lanjuinais is an honest and a bold "man, as I can tell; for I was the man who

"brought him the first news, in 1793, of his "being proscribed. I concealed him, and shall "never forget the intrepidity of his conduct." Mr. Lanjuinais voted against the imperial title, and was one of the opposition in the late chamber of peers. He has been always distinguished as a true patriot, firm, but moderate, a supporter of all the first principles, but stained with none of the excesses, of the revolution. Four hundred and seventy-two members voted at the first ballotting: 189 were for Mr. Lanjuinais; 74 for Mr. Flauguergues, (an eloquent person, and celebrated for his boldness in the legislative assembly in 1813, and his speech upon the court of cassation in the chamber of deputies); 51 for Lafayette the father; 17 for Lafayette, without any designation; 41 for Count Merlin; 29 for Mr. Dupont; and a smaller number to some other members, of whom Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely was one. When the first vote was given for him, I recollect that my neighbours in the galleries burst into a laugh; and one said he must have put that vote in himself. We are mistaken in England, and unjust, in supposing that the French have no sense of morality. If capacity alone could insure respect, Mr. Regnault would not have a character too pronounced in a certain way, to incapacitate him even for the chance of the presi-

dency. Both Mr. Merlin and Mr. Bedoch would have had more supporters had not one been a counsellor of state and solicitor general of the court of cassation, and the other imperial solicitor and ex-counsellor extraordinary of the Emperor in several departments. Any connexion with the court would be fatal to greater favourites than either of those two gentlemen in being candidates for the president's chair: but Mr. Bedoch is elected a secretary. You have already seen that the support which the representatives may give to the government may be entirely independent of all considerations but those of duty to their constituents. You are, perhaps, not aware that the presidency of the French chamber does not answer exactly to the chair of the house of commons, at least, not in our times; and that it is not only the organ, but, in some measure, the mirror of the assembly, whose general complexion may be judged from, and is also a little dependent upon, the character of the man of their choice. Mr. Lanjuinais could not be chosen for that dignity of manner or person so useful in our Speaker; but for the known firmness and honesty which would render him a faithful and fit channel of communication between the representatives of the people and the monarch. The assembly has the same object in view in the selection of the four vice-presidents, of

whom Mr. Flaugergues was the first chosen, Mr. Dupont the second, Mr. Lafayette the third, and General Grenier the fourth; all of them men notorious for that independence of either court, of Louis or Napoleon, which recommended them to the representatives.

. The day following the choice of the president I was again in the galleries, when a scene arose which has decided the character of the assembly. The provisional president announced that he had informed the Emperor of their choice of Mr. Lanjuinais, and had received for answer, that his majesty would communicate with them by a chamberlain. The most violent murmurs instantly burst out on all sides; many members rose at once; some spoke from their places, others struggled to reach the tribune. At last a member declared a chamberlain to be a very unfit channel of official correspondence between the Emperor and the representatives of the people; and this sentiment was repeated by the patriotic Dumolard, one of the opposition in the late chamber of deputies, who added, that the president could hardly have heard his majesty's answer distinctly. Mr. Regnault de St. Jean d'Angely agreed with Dumolard, and left the chamber, which adjourned its sitting, to wait for the Emperor's reply. Mr. Regnault returned not long after,

with the approval at the bottom of the message transmitted by the provisional president, simply in these words—" I approve.——Napoleon." Lanjuinais made a short speech, and ascended to the chair amidst the shouts of the assembly.

It was the representation of Mr. Regnault which occasioned this change in the decision of Napoleon; and his conformity with the wishes of the representatives was shewn in another instance the same day, by the same minister bringing down to the house the list of the chamber of peers, which had been refused the day before. An excuse was made the next day for the intimation given respecting the chamberlain, by M. Boullay de la Meurthe, counsellor of state, who informed the chamber that his majesty, on receiving the provisional president, testified his regret that he had not been before informed of his presence in the anti-chamber. The Emperor has seen M. Lanjuinais, and has addressed him, as the story goes, to this purport: " Mr. L., some tell me that " you are a Bourbonist, others that you are my " personal enemy, others that you are a true " lover of your country; you will conclude " which of the three I believe when I congra- " tulate you and the chamber on the choice it " has made of such a president."

Neither the quick impatient tone of the

president, nor his bell, is able at all times to command silence in the assembly, which occasionally breaks out into the tumults incident to a popular body in its first meetings.

The imperial session takes place to-morrow, and Napoleon will then open his two houses in form, at the palace of the legislative body. There was some noisy discussion this morning, relative to the method in which the members of the imperial family should be received, and two or three indignant hints were thrown out, deprecatory of all such renewal of formal ceremonies, which, however, the president very prudently discouraged, by stating that the matter, being a mere form, was unworthy the suspicion, and consequently the reflection, of the free representatives of the people. A more serious attempt was made to convince the Emperor that he must expect no sort of subjection, either in form or reality, from this new parliament; for a Mr. Dupin objected, in a set speech, to the oath to be taken at the imperial session, which he asserted should not be in virtue of a decree, but only of a law made by the whole legislature. He demurred also to the inference which might be drawn from that oath in favour of the immutability of the constitution. However this opinion was overruled by Mr. Dumolard, who nobly observed, "that if they

"had to choose between their country and their "Emperor he should not hesitate an instant; but "that the case was not so, since in the critical "circumstances in which they were placed, the "nation was to be saved by and with the Empe- "ror:" he protested, therefore, against affording ground for suspicion of distrust and disunion to the open and the secret enemies of France, and moved the order of the day. The speech of Mr. Dumolard had an unexpected effect in inducing General Sebastiani not only to object to Mr. Dupin, but to make use of his proposition, by grounding upon it a pointed declaration of the chamber in favour of the oath to be taken to-morrow, of obedience to the constitutions of the empire and fidelity to the Emperor. The resolution was passed, and was followed up by a proposal from General Carnot, to declare the army to be national, and to have merited well of the country; which would have been adopted, had not Mr. Regnault suggested that it would be better to reserve that measure for an act of both houses and of the Emperor. I should mention that M. Boullay de la Meurthe, in declaring for the oath, stated expressly that in so doing he judged that the house reserved the right of ameliorating the constitution. You will agree with him and M. Dumolard, in thinking the objections of M. Dupin to be ground-

less; but will see in these objections, as well as in the whole course of proceeding in the chamber, how false are all the assertions of your Bourbonist partisans relative to the subserviency of the *pretended* representatives of the people to the will of the Emperor. According to the present system of representation, it is calculated that only a seven-hundredth part of the people of France enjoy the elective franchise; and that the mass of citizens have only the privilege of choosing once in twenty-five or thirty years an elector, who is to vote once in five years for a deputy. Many objections may be made to the present formation of the electoral colleges, which is contrary to the decision of the constituent assembly, that determined the number of electors by the number of citizens; but if the present chamber shall display, as it appears will be the case, a spirit of liberty and moderation, I shall think them as fair a representation of the wishes and interests of the nation as the convention parliament was of those of our own country. They will, most probably, be called upon to display every virtue of patriotism, and that very shortly; for the rival armies are in presence, and wait but for the signal to commence the mighty massacre.

Napoleon seems to have taken a last leave

of the people of Paris in the fête of Sunday, the 4th. On that day there was a distribution of bread, and fowls, and sausages, and wine, in the Champs Elysées, where rope-dancing, horsemanship, greased poles, mountebanks, conjurors, and all the fooleries of Bartholomew fair were let loose, gratis, to that portion of the Parisian populace which requires a Frenchman, as well as a French word, faithfully to represent. The *canaille* were, indeed, in all their glory; but, notwithstanding there was as much drunkenness as can be expected from the effusions of sixteen fountains of wine, I saw only one disturbance, and that was occasioned by a boy, who was instantly hurried off by a picquet of soldiers—those efficient coadjutors of the police being stationed at intervals in every part of the fields. Bands of musicians played to dancers, who, though of the lowest order, figured in a manner that would have shamed the awkward essays of some of our cotillon beaux. Not a melancholy nor an angry face was to be seen throughout the vast concourse thus celebrating, as it were, the eve of a day which must make widows and orphans of half the officiating crowd. But the life of this people is liveliness, which is their mode of existence. I recollect that when on one side of the Tuileries the twelve thousand federates were

parading before Napoleon, with shouts which recalled the times of terror, and which the courtiers of the Emperor did not choose to renew by a second similar review, the windows at the back of the palace looked out upon strings of girls dancing round the fountains, to the delight of many tranquil groups of Sunday spectators. In the evening of this day there was an illumination at the Tuileries, and a public concert performed in a temporary structure in front of the centre balcony of the palace. There was an immense but orderly crowd opposite to this part of the palace, and stretching far down the centre walk, towards the Champs Elysées. The palace and gardens were lighted up by nine o'clock, and in three quarters of an hour the pavilion, in the midst of the orchestra, had some tapers placed in it. The musicians arrived, and were ranged on each side, in the open air. Soon afterward Napoleon, in his Spanish hat and feather, and in his crimson tunic, appeared at the window, with the princes of his family and the Princess Hortense. He stepped forwards into his pavilion, saluted the people quickly three or four times, and sat down. The orchestra performed an overture, and then sung the Lyonnaise, which was received with raptures: other music was performed, which did not, however, last long,

and was ended by the *Vivat in æternum*. It was a romantic sight, and such as those only who have seen the Tuileries illuminated can conceive. The presence of the Emperor and his court, with the music in the open air, and the unnumbered crowd seen, as at noon day, in the lustre of glittering palaces and groves, added to the fairy sprightliness of the scene; and a spectator might have thought himself any where but in France, had he not known that in no other country could he witness such a sight. The instant the music ceased a rocket rushed from the summit of the palace, and gave signal to the fireworks prepared in the Place de la Concorde, part of which displayed a large ship, in the midst of a landscape of sea and rock, representing the vessel that bore Napoleon from the island of Elba. A figure larger than life, in a green uniform, and distinguished no less by the plain hat of the Emperor than by a star auspiciously blazing over his head, stood on the deck of the ship, and shewed the image of the hero of the day to all those who could not approach near enough to see the original, at the other end of the gardens. The day terminated without a single accident, although the shouts of *Vive l'Empereur* were prolonged by the parties of feasted federates to a late hour of the night.

The Parisians observe that the weather of this day, as well as of that of the Champ de Mai, was superb, although rain had threatened to fall on both occasions, and did come the ensuing days. This to them is ominous. More than one or two persons remarked to me that the Emperor always had had fine weather for his fêtes, except on those immediately preceding and following the fatal Russian campaign. This superstition is said to attach to Napoleon himself, with whom, perhaps, it originated, and so became the reigning distortion, like the wry necks of the Macedonians, or the thin legs of King Edward's courtiers.

Napoleon had passed the whole morning of this day, until seven o'clock, in receiving the electoral colleges and the military and naval deputations. He first saw them on his throne in the Tuileries, and afterwards passed them in review in the gallery of the Museum, down the whole length of which the departments, with their eagles, were ranged to the right, and the land and sea armies, with their eagles, to the left; the saloon at the extremity being filled with deputations of the imperial guards, of the invalids, and of the veterans. The Emperor spoke to almost every man of the ten thousand who were present, and with his accustomed ease and variety of conversation; replying to intelligence

by no means agreeable with a frankness most unroyal. He spoke, amongst others, to a friend of mine, a colonel in the army, a notorious royalist, and an elector for the Marseillois.—"How many electors met in your department, "colonel?" "Thirteen, Sire." "*Ah, com-*"*ment!* How many deputies did you choose?" "Six." "What! six deputies for thirteen elec-"tors? *l'esprit doit être bien mauvais là; il faut le* "*ranimer.*" Napoleon said this with a face half serious, half smiling, as if he knew how happy my colonel was to tell such news, for he was well acquainted with him; and, when he added "*Oui, sire,*" made a sort of grimace, and walked on.

You see that the Moniteur is full of addresses from different public bodies, expressive of devotion to the cause of the Emperor and of France, and records the many voluntary donations which have been poured into the public treasury, for the service of the state, in this great national struggle. Different associations are forming at Paris and in the departments, for affording relief to the sufferers by the war; and the minister Carnot has put himself at the head of a society calling themselves the Friends of Humanity, or some such *suspected* title, the object of which is to be the dissemination of liberal principles, and the reward and relief of

those who distinguish themselves as friends and champions of liberty. On the 1st of June, the day of the Champ de Mai, the minister of war addressed an order of the day to the soldiery, calling them to arms; and telling them the signal would soon be given which would lead them to victory, and confirm for ever the glory and the independence of France.

In the Moniteur of the 4th, the extent of the insurrection of La Vendée, which had long been rumoured at Paris, received an official authenticity, by a circular letter, dated the 28th of May, from the minister of police, and by a proclamation (dated Angers, 29th) of General Lamarque, who has taken the field, and is said to have already routed the insurgents in several actions. The operations of the English on the western coast, and their communications with the La Vendéans, may be called a commencement of hostilities: but, if there were any doubt before of the fatal determination of our ministry, the capture of the Melpomene by the Rivoli must annihilate every hope of peace. Yet such is the violent inclination here for avoiding the renewal of war, that several journals, and, at last, the Moniteur, hint that the action took place by a mistake of the British captain.

The director-general of the posts mentioned

LETTER XXI.

Paris, June 10.

On Wednesday, at two o'clock, another Englishman and myself went to the palace of the legislative body, and, after some trouble, got into the galleries of the theatre of the house of representatives, which were shortly filled chiefly with ladies in evening dresses. A tribune was boarded off for the ladies of the court:—a throne was placed on the elevation in the circular niche, where the president's chair is raised; and on the steps beneath were ranged benches, those on the right being for the ministers, and the others on the left for the marshals of the empire. One chair was at the right of the throne, and two on the left; and a stool stood at each side beyond. The four lower ranges of seats were reserved for the house of peers, except a semicircle on the left, which was kept apart for the counsellors of state. The deputies filled all the upper seats of the theatre. In an hour the peers began to arrive, nearly all of them either in regimentals or in broad cordons.

The counsellors of state took their places: and shortly afterwards Napoleon's mother (usually known by the title of Madame Mere, a very handsome, regular featured, princely personage, young of her age) entered the gallery with the Princess Hortense, and the beautiful Duchesses of Bassano, Rovigo, and Vicenza. At four o'clock we heard the cannon of the Tuileries, and, in about twenty minutes, the cannon stationed near the palace; at which time the folding doors of the theatre, opposite the throne, were thrown open; and the 25 members, with the president who had received the court, walked down the steps, followed by the ministers of state and the marshals, who took their places by the throne: after these came the chamberlains and pages: and lastly, a man shouted with a loud voice, *L'EMPEREUR!* —and Napoleon appeared. He wore his bonnet and imperial mantle, and was attended by the princes his brothers, by aide-de-camps and marshals in waiting, together with other great officers of his court; amongst whom were Cardinal Cambaceres, the grand almoner, and the prince archchancellor his brother, in his robe of bees. The whole assembly arose—Napoleon walked down to the area of the theatre, and then ascended the steps to the throne amidst continued acclamations. He turned round,

bowed, and sat down. Lucien took place to his left; Joseph, King of Spain, to his right. The chair of Prince Jerome, King of Westphalia, was vacant, so were the stools. The princes wore white, robes as on the *Champ de Mai.* The aide-de-camps and marshals stood behind the throne. The whole assembly continued standing, when the grand master of the ceremonies, the Count Segur, was addressed by the Emperor. The grand master then exclaimed, "the Emperor begs you will be seated,"—and all took their seats. The president Lanjuinais was seated in front of the throne, with two serjeants at arms behind his chair. The archchancellor, advancing in face of the Emperor, informed him that the members of the two houses would proceed to take the oath of obedience to the constitution, and fidelity to his majesty. Accordingly, the names of the peers were first called over, beginning with Prince Joseph; who, standing up, turning to his imperial brother, and stretching out his hand towards him, exclaimed, "*Je jure!*" a ceremony observed by Lucien, and by all the peers. This oath, and that of the representatives, which followed, lasted a tedious time. Several names must have awakened certain recollections; but there was no curiosity excited in the assembly, except at calling over La Fayette,

when all eyes were raised, and Napoleon himself looked towards the general. Napoleon continually took lozenges from a small box in his hand, and appeared to labour considerably in his chest. He was evidently unwell: except speaking twice to Prince Joseph, he said not a word to any one near him. When the oaths were finished, he adjusted himself, turned to the left, pulled off his bonnet, saluted the assembly, recovered himself, and, unrolling a paper, began his speech. His mantle embarrassed him, and he turned it partially over his left shoulder—his voice was distinct and clear, but rather feeble towards the end of the discourse. I lost not a word: and looked, I own, a little red, when he said, "*La frégate la* "*Melpomène a été attaquée et prise dans la Mé-*" *diterranée après un combat sanglant contre un* "*vaisseau Anglais de 74. Le sang a coulé pen-*" *dant la paix!*" The mention of this isolated fact startled me, as it designated the head and real mover of the new coalition, and seemed the first step towards that line of policy, which, of course, when the war is begun, will attempt to exasperate the nation against our countrymen. I send the speech, which appears to me preferable to that of the *Champ de Mai**. When he

* See Appendix—No. 16.

spoke the last sentence, "*La sainte cause de la "patrie triomphera,*" he elevated his voice, and seemed unconsciously to give a jerk or half flourish with his right hand. He instantly rose, bowed to the assembly, and retired amidst thunders of acclamations, which accompanied him from the throne until he disappeared at the door, and obliged him several times to turn round and salute the assembly as he was quickly ascending the stairs from the area:—he appeared highly delighted. Indeed nothing could exceed the enthusiasm, which was the more gratifying, as it proceeded from such an assemblage; and which appeared the more spontaneous, as the cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* were not more frequent than those of *Vive la Nation! Vive la France!* I have a presentiment of having seen this extraordinary man for the last time.

Notwithstanding the qualifying phrase, *it is possible*, no one doubted that he would set off immediately for the army. The imperial guard had nearly all marched on the day of the opening the session, only the depôts remain; and the duty of the Tuileries, and other public palaces, is performed by the national guards. He has now done all that he promised the people at his restoration, which depended upon himself: he has, as he truly says, commenced the constitutional monarchy, and given the people

of France something more substantial and permanent to fight for than any vain attachment to their glory or to their monarch. Of this the character of the chamber of representatives is alone sufficient to furnish a decided proof. The day after the imperial session a proposal was made by Mr. Garnier, to state in the procès verbal of the opening the parliament, that the sentiments of the assembly were unanimous on that occasion: but the president observed, that this regard to unanimity might be inimical to individual opinions; and the same objection being made by Mr. Dumolard, the order of the day was adopted, and the president proposed the formation of a committee for preparing the address, which committee was named and formed of the bureau, together with five other members. An evidence no less clear of the warrantable jealousy with which the new parliament would guard themselves from every suspicion of undue deference to the constitutional monarch, was shown in a short debate that ensued, upon a proposal of Mr. Felix Lepelletier the same day, to decree in the address the title of Saviour of his country to Napoleon. Not only the most tumultuous cries of the order of the day arose from all parts of the house, to discourage this premature flattery; but Mr. Dupin mounted the tribune, and protested ve-

hemently against that adulation which had misled so many preceding legislative bodies; adding also, " if we anticipate events, what means " will be reserved by which we shall demon- " strate our gratitude, at the moment when our " country *shall* be saved."

The sitting of the next day was attended with a circumstance equally declaratory of the reassumption of the national rights. I found that the whole bureau had been chosen, and made, indeed, a respectable appearance with its president, four vice-presidents, and four secretaries, attended by the eight serjeants at arms. The statue of Napoleon was replaced on the pedestal behind the Emperor's chair. Several reports from committees were read to the house, and received with some little discussion, which called up many orators, some of whom spoke from the tribunes, others from their places, and were more or less listened to, according as the opinions inclined to the popular sentiments of the day.

The president informed the house, that several projects of addresses had been handed in to the committee, and that the one judged most suitable would be submitted to the house the next day. But a discussion of the utmost importance then ensued, and was carried on with all the warmth

that a question involving the liberty of the subject might be expected to excite. A member, rising in his place, enquired what method ought to be adopted for the presentation of petitions to the house, and proposed a provisional committee for the reception and preparation of suitable petitions; but against this mode there were many objectors, who asserted, that the establishment of a committee might put some difficulties in the way of petitions, contrary to the rights of the citizens. In the heat of the argument, an officer, with some anger, said, that the first thing to be considered was, to answer the Emperor's speech, and dropped the expression of "*an effusion of the heart*, on the part of the members, for his Majesty's goodness." The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when he was put down with a shout of disapprobation, and, leaving his place, went out of the chamber with evident marks of disgust. The president himself remarked, that the discussion of the present question could not be postponed—that it was the first duty of the representatives to attend to their constituents. He was followed by others, and amongst them by Mr. Flaugergues, who, in an eloquent speech, recommended the adoption of the mode pointed out in the constitution, and sanc-

tioned by the practice of the English parliament, in which a petition was presented by a member, and then the house voted whether or not it should be considered.

In mentioning the practice of England, he qualified his approbation, by stating, that he did not wish to hold up the rivals of France to any other applause than that which they derived from the sanction which experience had given to some of their institutions. The member who had stated the question then came forward again, and asked the house whether it was their pleasure he should read a petition from a citizen illegally arrested, and put under the inspection of the mayor, in the prison of Valence. The petition was read; and, proving to contain a case which merited the attention of the assembly, was ordered to be presented to the Emperor by the president. The next day, Mr. Regnault de St. Jean D'Angely informed the house, that the petition had been transferred to the proper ministers by the Emperor, and that the consequence had been an immediate order for the enlargement of the petitioner, and a restoration to his functions. Can a more decided proof be wanting of the omnipotence of the national representation, and of their inclination to consult before all things the interests of their constituents? This comes

opportunely to you, who see in the Courier, that any one found reading that journal or the Times is punished by a fine of 100 Napoleons, and a year's imprisonment; and that 600 persons have been arrested for exclaiming a little too publicly against the government of Napoleon.

LETTER XXII.

Sunday, June 11.

THE sitting of the chamber of representatives was private yesterday, when the address was taken into consideration. The peers had less difficulty in framing their speech to his Majesty; but that body seems to be forgotten, in the general anxiety to observe the conduct of the lower house. It cannot be expected that the jealousy manifested in the proceedings of the representatives should be altogether so pleasing to the immediate friends of the court and personal partisans of the Emperor, some of whom affect to regret that he did not prorogue the parliament, whilst others more openly insist upon the danger of Napoleon's delaying his military movements, of which the protracted discussions on the address are alleged to be the cause. To me it appears that Napoleon should have convoked the legislative body immediately upon his return—should have left to them the *original* formation of a constitution—and instantly upon finding the allies were resolved upon war, have marched upon Belgium, where he could not have met with resistance sufficient to oppose the concentrated armies of France. By this conduct he would

have escaped the unpopularity of his own "additional act," have shown his perfect confidence in his subjects, and have avoided the evil consequences which may now arise from delay. As to proroguing the parliament, it is to be doubted whether the Emperor could at this time do it if he would. The chamber has accepted the offer of a guard from the national guards of Paris, and all the regular troops have marched to the frontiers. Besides this, the chamber is composed of men who seem in possession of the confidence of the nation; and as in all essential points they afford every support to the executive, any attempt against them would weaken the hands of government, and perhaps be fatal to the personal cause of the Emperor. The repeated accounts received of the preparations making on the part of the allies, and the report of the allied sovereigns having commenced their march towards the armies, naturally increase the anxiety of the friends of the government to see Napoleon at the head of his soldiers. Mr. S——, addressing me yesterday evening, said that the delay was inconceivable; that Napoleon had four times before lost himself by hesitation, and might a fifth time. The same gentleman, and some others, were angry with the chamber for being so long in presenting their address, and added, "If they do not "intend to support the Emperor, let them de-

" clare so at once, and proclaim the King of " Rome, or Duke of Orleans, or any other per- " son." In the sixth volume of the Censor, it is proposed that the chambers should send deputies to the allied head-quarters, offering every reasonable guarantee for the maintenance of the peace of Paris, and the popular restriction of the imperial power. In short, the republican party already appears to be decidedly predominant; and when I say the republican party, I mean the constitutionalists, in contradistinction to the personal partisans of Napoleon, of whom there are reckoned no more than a hundred in the whole representation. It is easy to see that the court has its fears of this party. In the Moniteur of last Friday, the 9th, appeared an essay to prove the folly and inconsistency of those who are jealous of a military power in a country where, and at a time when every thing has been preserved, as every thing is to be decided, by the soldiery. As long as the chamber is convinced that the country is to be saved, as Mr. Dumolard said, by and with Napoleon, they will afford him every assistance consistent with their paramount attachment to the rights of their constituents; and it is but justice to the French nation to say, that their devotion in support of this man has increased in proportion as his enemies have appeared more determined upon his

fall. Regarding him as their constitutional monarch, they have consented to confront in his behalf a peril greater than that with which a nation was ever threatened, and to consider his glory as an indispensable condition of their liberty. The moveable army of the empire amounts at this moment to 850,000 men, of whom 375,000 are regulars, including 40,000 of the imperial guard. Of these 375,000—200,000 have been raised since the 20th of March, and are all old soldiers, above twenty years of age *. The national guards amount to 2,254,320, a thirteenth of the whole population. But this devotion of the people supposes and expects a corresponding exertion on the part of the Emperor, and it may be added, such exertion as from its first successes or its perseverance may justify their choice of a chief. Should Napoleon meet with any signal disaster, it is an opinion of some, (and I heard it publicly delivered a day or two ago) that the representatives will think that the state is to be saved by other hands. You will observe, that in his speech to the parliament he takes care to recommend to their attention the necessity of putting some restraint upon the press. In Carnot's report is to be found a strong and fair representation of the ex-

* Carnot's Report to the Emperor.

cesses of the press, and the attempts of the Bourbon agents, which it was *impossible for any actual monarch to suffer and reign.* On the whole, Napoleon must be supposed to feel that his crown depends entirely upon himself, and that he does not leave behind him at Paris friends sufficiently powerful or numerous to excuse misconduct or repair the losses of repeated failure.

The two houses have at last presented their addresses this day at the Tuileries. That of the peers contains sentiments very honourable to the independence of that body, and, you will own, very moderate*. They promise not to be depressed by adversity; but add, that their constitutions guarantee to all Europe that the French government cannot be carried away by the seductions of victory. To this latter sentiment Napoleon replied, in the very opening of his answer, and sufficiently evinced his feeling of such a hint, when he said, "The struggle in "which we are engaged is serious. The se-"duction of prosperity is not the danger which "menaces us at this moment. It is under the "Caudine forks that our enemies would now "force us to pass."

The address of the commons is conceived in the same spirit of firmness and moderation; and

* See Appendix—No. 17.

at the same time that it shows the determination of the representatives to make the establishment of a free constitution their first care, and declares that the will of a victorious prince will be impotent in any endeavour to draw the nation beyond the limits necessary for its defence, declares that they are ready to co-operate to the utmost with the monarch of their choice in every effort for maintaining the liberty, the honour, and the dignity of France. It breathes ardent vows for peace, and expresses the hope that the Emperor will afford them every document to prove that nothing has been left undone to procure the continuance of that blessing.

The answer of Napoleon imparted the important, the long-expected news, that he should depart for the army, and depart to-night. He frankly advised the representatives not to imitate the example of the lower empire, which, pressed on all sides by the barbarians, became the laughter of posterity by occupying itself with abstract discussions, whilst the battering-rams thundered at their gates: but he no less openly encouraged their labours and anxiety for the immediate formation of a constitution, and concluded in a style worthy of himself and of his cause. "On all occasions my march "will be always upright and unshaken. Help "me to save your country. As the first repre-

"sentative of the people, I have contracted "the obligation which I here renew to employ, "in more tranquil times, all the prerogatives "of the crown, and any small experience "which I may have acquired, in seconding "your efforts towards the amelioration of our "constitution." You may admire this answer; but you must remark also the same tendency towards irritation which discovers itself in the reply to the peers. By what abstract questions the chamber has delayed its attention to the immediate necessities of the state, I know not, except Napoleon alludes to the discussions on the words of the address to himself, or to the debates upon matters of form, which have occupied the chamber rather too much; but which might be expected in an infant assembly. I could not help myself remarking, that it would be necessary for the chamber to have recourse to some regulations which should save them from the embarrassment and delay they at present experience by private presentation of homages, and pamphlets, and offers of service from individuals. You will recognize, perhaps, in the language of the two replies, a confirmation of what I before said relative to the state of public feeling, and the suspicions of the Emperor's personal partisans. An article in the journal, devoted to the constitutionalists, called

the Independent, of the 8th of June, on the national independence and public liberty, contains a tirade against absolute power, and the personal importance of the monarch, which glances distinctly at the character of the Emperor.

It remains to be seen how the friends of liberty will conduct themselves should he be crowned with signal success. He says, "I de-"part to-night;" but indicates no spot to which he directs his steps. Relays of post horses have been ordered some days for him on all the principal roads: a method of concealing his actual destination which he has often before adopted.

LETTER XXII.

Monday, June 12.

NAPOLEON left Paris this morning at half after three o'clock. The Moniteur does not mention his departure, which is noticed by some journals, that add he has taken the road to Soissons. It is rumoured that orders were transmitted two days ago to the army, in front of Marshal Blucher, to drive in the Prussian posts; but it may be hoped that the Duke of Wellington is better informed of the intended movements of the French than the Parisians, who know nothing beyond the mere fact, that the war is about to begin, and that as the Emperor has joined his forces, a great blow will be struck at once.

The head-quarters are to be at Brussels, on or before the 20th—so they *bet*—which in France is a greater proof of confidence than in England. Indeed this will be an imperial conflict—*certandum est de imperio*. It is the civil war of sovereigns, and the first battle may win a crown. It has been reserved for our own gigantic times to witness a war of which the avowed purpose is the dethronement of an Em-

peror; a project which, considered as the effort of enemies, not of rivals, (for Louis is not a Maria Theresa,) is without precedent, although the example may be too alluring to leave it without imitators. The occupation of Brussels and the retreat of Lord Wellington to Antwerp are to be followed by a proposition for peace. Such is the language of those who think the enthusiasm of the French army and the genius of their chief irresistible. Indeed I meet with very few here who think it probable that *la furia Francese* will be withstood at the onset: even the acknowledged talents of our commander-in-chief, and the proverbial courage of Englishmen, are thought unequal, since they have never been put in opposition, to Napoleon and his guard. But the more timid, not to say the more thinking, reasoners, predict that France must finally succumb if the alliance should not be dissolved by the first successes of the Emperor. This will be the case if the affair is to be determined by pitched battles, instead of being protracted into a war of posts; but the immense means of defence which the genius and activity of Napoleon, and the devotion of his subjects, have already developed, if sparingly and pertinaciously employed, would, I fancy, resist the combination of the allies, liable as it must be to all the principles of in-

ternal dissolution. The natural solicitude for and importance of Paris increase the dangers of the cause. A single defeat lays bare the walls of the capital, and no more is expected from the batteries of Montmartre than from the national guard. The influence of the metropolis upon the feeling of the people unhappily connects the ruin of the empire with the fall of this fatal city, and precipitates or cramps the measures which might otherwise be adopted for the general safety. The twelfth legion of the national guards, and other corps, have solemnly sworn at banquets to die beneath the entrenchments which they have raised; but this sacrifice they may make and not save the town. I know that it was the opinion of Napoleon, if I can trust my informant, who had it from the Emperor's mouth, that had he not been deserted by Marshal Marmont he might have occupied one side of Paris, whilst the allies were in possession of the other, and, assisted by the suburbs and armed levies, would have finally succeeded in cutting off the retreat of his enemies. It is not to be supposed that he would have refrained from the partial destruction of the city, had such an extremity been necessary for the success of his military operations. The Duke of Ragusa, in his Justificatory Memoir, owns that Napoleon would have marched from

Fontainbleau to Paris if his officers would have seconded him. I am aware that Napoleon has denied his intention of burning Paris; but Jerome, King of Westphalia, told Mr. P—— that his brother positively commanded that last great sacrifice; and, on being asked what he would have done with such and such papers and documents, answered, "They will be "burned with the rest." Also let me add, M. de L——r is generally designated here as the person who prevented the dreadful measure from being executed. With such a persuasion, and with the threat ringing in their ears, that Europe shall see what the fall of a great man will cost, the Parisians, even those who are royalists, tremble at the apprehension of a defeat, which may lay their city in ashes, and let loose upon them, not only the fury of a triumphant enemy, but the despair of their own fellow-citizens. The command of the first military division is left to Cafarelli, who has published an order of the day relative to the defence of the town and its environs. The first personal efforts of the Emperor begin under happy auspices; for a circular from the minister of war, of the date of yesterday, announces the repeated defeat of the insurgents of La Vendée; and the Moniteur of to-day gives some favourable details from the official

correspondence of General Lamarque. It cannot be without some regret that the friends of the imperial family read in the same paper the account of the final conquest of the kingdom of Naples, which, I suppose, is regarded at home as the first triumph of legitimacy.

Regarding Napoleon and his warriors as the partisans of the cause of peoples against the conspiracy of kings, whatever may be my regret that that cause has not fallen into hands so pure as to command unqualified support, I cannot help wishing that the French may meet with as much success as will not compromise the military character of my own countrymen. But, as an Englishman, I will not be witness to their triumphs; as a lover of liberty, I would not be a spectator of their reverses. I leave Paris to-morrow. The police and the minister for foreign affairs signed my passport for Geneva at the first demand; and, as I learn, no difficulty has hitherto been put in the way of any one wishing to quit the capital or the country. I regret much that I shall not stay to hear the report of the minister of the interior, which is to be read to the chamber of representatives the day after to-morrow, and which I will take care to transmit to you, in case it should not appear in the English papers, that you may have some notion of the activity of a

government which must command the admiration of the world, and which, should it fall to-morrow, has in three months done enough for the glory, though it should fail to procure the happiness, of France. In the chamber of representatives, to-day, it appears that two members had already intended to communicate propositions relative to the great work of the constitution; but the business was postponed upon the suggestion of Mr. Dumolard, that all projects should lie upon the table twenty-four hours previously to their public presentation; and Mr. Felix Desportes then read a petition, *demanding justice, not imploring favour*, from the Emperor, by an individual who had been put under the inspection of the mayor of Epernay by the minister of war. After some discussion the assembly agreed to refer the petition to a committee of examination, rather than decide at once upon its merits, as that proceeding might give rise to an opinion that the legislative body was endeavouring in every thing, and at the first complaint, to thwart the measures of the executive. One cannot but conceive the best hopes from such an union of spirit and prudence. A regency of ministers has been named, at the head of which is placed his Imperial Highness Prince Joseph.

LETTER XXIII.

Bourg, Sunday, June 25.

On Tuesday, the 13th, Mr. B..... and myself left Paris for Geneva; and travelling by Joigny, Tonnerre, and Dijon, arrived as far as Morez, within thirty miles of that town. We had heard at Dole that Geneva was blockaded, and the same intelligence was conveyed to us at Champagnole and St. Laurent; but we determined to proceed, and make an effort to cross the frontiers. At Morez, however, where we found about 1000 national guards employed in fortifying that pass of the Jura, the Marechal de Camp, Baron Gaussard, informed us, that General Lecourbe had visited the outposts the day before, and had given the strictest orders that all communications should cease between the two countries. My fellow-traveller had procured a letter of introduction for us from Count Mollien, minister of the imperial treasury, to Marshal the Duke of Albufera; and this letter, Baron Gaussard informed us, would have enabled us to pass, had the marshal commanded at Morez; but, unfortunately, between that place and Rousses, the next post,

was a narrow tongue of land belonging to Switzerland, whose territory the baron had express orders not to violate, and the command of Marshal Suchet commenced only at Gex, the frontier town. We were advised, therefore, by the baron to return; and if our object was of the last importance, to make a *detour* (a long one indeed, about 250 miles) to Chamberri, the head-quarters of the duke, who might then, if he found it expedient, forward our views, and make an exception in our favour. On the evening of the 18th, therefore, we retraced our steps to Champagnole, and crossed the mountains to Lons le Saulnier. There a general informed us, that Marshal Suchet had engaged the Piedmontese at Montmellian, and would be in Turin in a few days. We proceeded by Beaufort, St. Amour, and St. Etienne-du-Bois, to Bourg, the capital of the department of the Ain, where we were shown a telegraphic dispatch from Prince Joseph to the commander-in-chief of the army of the Alps, stating the Sambre to have been forced, Charleroy taken, and the Emperor to have gained a *complete victory* over the Duke of Wellington and Blucher on the 16th. At Pont d'Ain, the next stage, those who examined our passports unfortunately had drunk too many healths to the Emperor, on the news of this great exploit; and we were

not only stopped, but favoured with the honours of the *gendarmery* during that night and the next morning, when we were transferred back to Bourg, in order that the prefect might decide upon the probabilities of our story, which, to the uninstructed brigadier of this post, could not be reconciled with the prevalent opinion of English prudence. He supposed we must know that Geneva was blockaded, and would be bombarded in a day or two; and added many arguments to prove that we had some concealed plans, and that we were not Englishmen. It is possible there might have been some little intemperance of expression on both sides; but be that as it will, the matter might have terminated more unpleasantly for us if the mayor of Ain had not stood our friend, and persuaded the *gendarme* of the reasonableness of our request to return to Bourg. The only circumstance now worth recording is, that a person who was present at our examination, on hearing a hint that we might be transferred to a place of security for the evening, exclaimed, "no man can be put in "prison except by order of the representatives "and by a law of the legislature." This good person's notions of the new liberties of France were a little confused, but convinced us that the constitution had not been thrown away upon his countrymen. Baron Baude, the prefect at

Bourg, treated us with the utmost civility, and offered to dispatch our letter to Marshal Suchet by an estafette, on the condition that we should remain in the town until the arrival of his answer. We preferred taking this step to returning at once to Paris; and the prefect informed us, that the whole country being at present in arms, we were liable, through ignorance or some little informality in our passports, to be detained at any post, should we attempt to proceed towards Chamberri. Here then we have remained. Moniteurs up to the 20th have arrived regularly, and you may easily conceive the eagerness with which they are perused. That of the 14th contains no other intelligence than that Napoleon was at Soissons at 10 in the morning of the 12th, and at Laon at 4 in the afternoon, where he visited the works before he continued his journey. The Moniteur of the 15th gives the report of the minister of the interior, which was read to the chamber of representatives by Mr. Regnault de St. Jean D'Angely, in the sitting of the 13th. The chamber, on the 14th, heard some short discussion relative to its internal regulation, and the provision for the president and members of the assembly.—That paper contains no news from the army. The number of the 16th is equally silent; but the details of the sitting of

the representatives on the 15th are interesting. A Mr. Malleville proposed the presentation of a project in form of a law to the Emperor, relative to seditious provocations and the abuse of the liberty of the press. The cries of *Vive le Roi! Vivent les Bourbons! Vive Louis XVIII!* were included in the first. It was moved to adjourn the question until the hearing of the report of the minister of police the next day; and also on the ground, that previously to deciding on the abuse of the liberty of the press, some regulations should be made touching the jury selected to try that crime. The present jury is formed by the government, although the offence is always against the government. It was decided that Mr. Malleville should be heard on Saturday. Mr. Legueval, deputy for Morbihan, proposed a project relative to crimes committed by armed outlaws, and was heard patiently, until he came to an article which put all revolters, their ascendants and descendants, out of the protection of the law, when the orator was interrupted by loud cries of disapprobation, and of the order of the day, some voices adding, *avec la censure*. I beg you to remark the feeling of moderation which has more than once displayed itself in this *Jacobin* parliament. Mr. Pouilly named the next day for a proposition relative to the suspension of

the constitutional laws in the insurgent departments. Mr. Dupin proposed Monday for discussing a proposition which he should offer to the house, tending to form a committee of 21 members, *chargée de reunir nos constitutions, de les refondre et de les co-ordonner dans un projet de loi general.* Mr. Marques proposed that the Emperor should be invited to name a commission; and also the chamber of peers a certain number of members to assist the labours of the representatives in framing this constitution. The question was deferred till Monday. Mr. Malleville then proposed, that in no discussion the wish, the presumed intention, or an expression of the monarch, should be quoted to the house; but this important regulation was on the point of being laid aside, because the orator twice introduced the expression—"in England," an example which present feeling makes it more advisable to follow than to cite.

The Moniteur of the 17th is taken up with the voluminous report of the Duke of Vicenza, which contains a remonstrance against the conduct of the allies, accompanied with documents such as the chamber of representatives seemed to demand in their address to the Emperor, and tending to prove that Napoleon has done all in his power to maintain the peace of Europe, and has been forced at last into a war, which, in-

deed, has already been begun on the part of the enemy, and required, therefore, his immediate presence to conduct. "The English," says the Duke, "the Prussians, the Austrians, are in line. "The Russians are in full march—the head "of their first column passed Nurenberg on the "19th of May, and is now on the banks of the "Rhine. The Emperor of Russia and the King "of Prussia quitted Vienna on the 26th of "May, and the Emperor of Austria on the "27th. These sovereigns are at this moment "at the head of their armies, and your majesty "is yet at Paris . . . . Sire, all farther hesita- "tion must compromise the interests of our "country."

Indeed I should presume, that neither in France nor England will Napoleon want any excuse for having struck the first blow, except Mr. Grattan should, in his riot, have doomed him to bleed without resistance. The Moniteur contains a short bulletin, dated Charleroy, June 15, nine in the evening, couched in these words—"The army has forced the Sambre, taken "Charleroy, and driven the advanced posts half "way from Charleroy to Namur, and from Char- "leroy to Brussels. We have made 1500 pri- "soners, and taken six pieces of cannon. Four "Prussian regiments have been cut to pieces. "The Emperor's army has suffered but little;

"but he has experienced a sensible loss in the "death of General Letort, his aide-de-camp, who "was killed on the heights of Fleurus, leading a "charge of cavalry. The enthusiasm of the in- "habitants of Charleroy, and of all the countries "which we traverse, cannot be described."

The paper of the 18th gives at last the official detail of this first action, and also the Emperor's address to the army, dated Avesnes, June 14th, conceived in his usual terms, telling his soldiers that he addresses them on the anniversary of Marengo and Friedland*. A dispatch mentions the affair of Montmellian by Marshal Suchet. The Emperor, in a letter of the 16th, has written with his own hand—"Letort is "better." The French know how to appreciate such solicitude. In the chamber of peers on the 16th, an animated discussion took place on some internal regulations. That body began to assume an independent aspect, and the Count of Pontecoulant declared that if they had resolved not to be insignificant they must resolve often to displease. The Duke of Otranto's report was read to the chambers. It contains a picture by no means flattering or flattered of the state of the Empire, and holds that language of truth which it must be owned has characterised all the public acts of the im-

* See Appendix—No. 21.

perial ministry. The institutions of England are repeatedly quoted, to justify a suspension of the constitutional laws and a restriction of the abuses of the press; but the minister candidly confesses that, up to this time, the personal liberty of the subject has not been sufficiently secured against those exertions of authority which the divers orders in power conceive themselves justified in employing against suspected individuals. "The result of this," he adds, is "a general disquietude, a secret discontent, an "actual and progressive establishment of power "—for power does not always command obedi- "ence; obedience, on the contrary, is the mea- "sure and limit of power, and results amongst "all civilised peoples from the national con- "sent."*

Where such language can be held by a minister to his sovereign, and trusted to the ears of a nation, the establishment of despotism is not, surely, the most rational apprehension. In the chamber of representatives on the 16th, after hearing the report of the Duke of Vicenza read by Mr. Boulay de la Meurthe, counsellor of state, a warm debate arose upon the proposition of Mr. Jay, that, for the future, the reports of ministers should be addressed to the chamber, and the ministers be ready to answer any

* See Appendix—No. 20.

questions put by the members. Mr. Le Roi went so far as to propose that as the minister's communication gave notice of the inevitable commencement of war, that communication, according to the article thirty of the constitution of the year 8, which enacts "that all declarations of war shall be proposed, discussed, decreed, and promulgated as a law," should be transferred to a special committee. This proposal was contested by several members, and particularly by General Sebastiani; but a proposition of this general's, to transfer the important question of the method of communication between the executive and legislative to a special commission, was adopted almost unanimously. Mr. Pouilly notified his intention of proposing that the government should communicate the acts by which certain departments had been put out of the empire of the constitution, and that these acts should be discussed. The report of the minister of the police gave rise to much discussion on the necessity of taking some immediate step for the suppression of the insurgents. Mr. Dumolard proposed a commission of nine members for that purpose, but this was objected to, as an assumption of the initiative by the chamber, which is left by the constitution to the executive. Mr. Barrere, however, said that circumstances had evinced the influence and

force of truth, and of those principles of policy founded upon wisdom, by showing the necessity of two initiatives, one of the executive and the other of the legislative. Mr. Dumolard's proposition was negatived, and the chamber passed to the order of the day.

The same Moniteur contains, in six lines, the following intelligence, strangely squeezed into a corner of a column :—

"*News from the Army.*

"Behind Ligny, June 16th,
"half past eight in the evening.

"The Emperor has just obtained a complete "victory over the Prussian and English armies "united, under the orders of Lord Wellington "and Marshal Blücher. The army debouches "at this instant by the village of Ligny, in "front of Fleurus, to pursue the enemy."

The prefect, Baron Baude, has assured us that he has received confirmation of this great news. The paper of the next day (19th) gave a very short official letter from the Duke of Dalmatia to the minister of war, dated Fleurus, June 17—mentioning that Wellington and Blücher with difficulty saved themselves, and that the English army had lost some cannon

and some standards *. I suppose the marshal means to be pleasant when he says that the French were one to three. A private letter from Fleurus is inserted with that of the marshal-major-general of the army, stating that already eight thousand prisoners are taken, and twenty pieces of cannon, and many stand of colours. A charge of the old guard is said to have decided the battle. It is not said whether Prussians or English were chiefly engaged. In the sitting of the peers on the 17th, the report of the minister of police was read, and a discussion took place, similar to that in the representatives, relative to the initiative in the proposal of laws, which terminated in the suggestion of Count Thibeaudeau, that the communication between the executive and the legislative should be regulated by a special commission, consisting of commissioners named by the government and by each of the houses. In the chamber of representatives, on the same day, previously to the business already recorded, Mr. Malleville developed his project for the repression of the abuse of the liberty of the press, and a debate ensued relative to evacuating the galleries, which ended in the regulation that on the de-

* See Appendix—No. 22.

mand of twenty-five members the house must, at any time, resolve itself into a secret committee. Mr. Crochon said, in his speech, "we "are here by the people and for the people, "and it is in their presence that we ought to "determine even upon our internal expenses." This drew down loud applauses from the galleries, which, however, were reminded that all signs of praise or blame were forbidden. At the sitting of the 19th in the chamber of representatives, Mr. Crochon proposed a regulation relative to vacancies in the chamber, in which he insisted on the necessity of permitting the monarch to choose his ministers amongst the representatives of the people, citing the example of England, who you will observe to be still the model of those whom she is labouring to destroy. The minister of state, Defermont, read the report of the minister of finances, and the remainder of the sitting was taken up with determining the interior regulations respecting committees, and discussing the necessity of enquiring into the conduct of the editor of the Journal General de France, who had published that General Travot had been defeated in La Vendée, made prisoner, and exchanged for an insurgent chieftain. Much indignation was excited against the author of this seditious intelligence, which Mr. Regnault de St. Jean

d'Angely asserted to be positively false; but Mr. Dupin carried the order of the day, upon the presumption that the competent authorities would punish the delinquency.

The Moniteur of the 20th contains nothing relative to the war but a letter from an officer of the general staff, stating the battle of Fleurus to have been a complete victory, in which the combined armies were separated, four or five thousand Scotchmen cut to pieces, adding these words—"*Le noble lord doit être confondu.* The "grand total of the enemy's loss is fifty thou- "sand."

The last words are to us of painful interest: "*Quant aux Anglais, on verra aujourd'hui ce "qu'ils deviendront. L'Empereur est là.*" It is plain, then, the main English army has not been engaged*.

* See Appendix—No. 23.

END OF VOL. I.

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